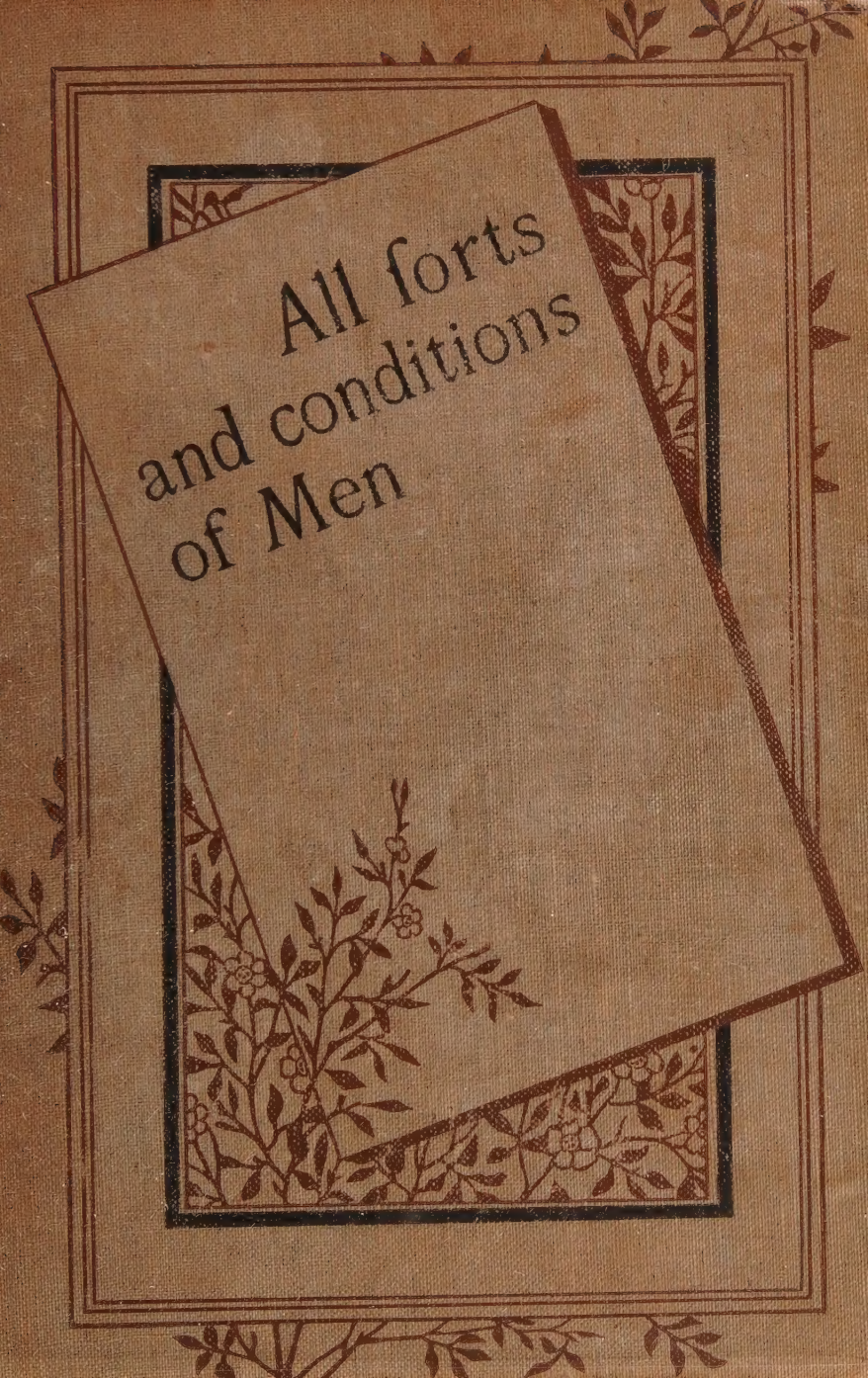

All forts
and conditions
of Men

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Warwick Castle.
From J. S.
August. 1883.

All Sorts and Conditions of Men

VOL. I.

LONDON : PRINTED BY
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AND PARLIAMENT STREET



"'*There, sir, I have read them.*"'

ALL SORTS AND CONDITIONS OF MEN

An Impossible Story

BY

WALTER BESANT

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY FRED. BARNARD

IN THREE VOLUMES—VOL. I.

London
CHATTO & WINDUS, PICCADILLY
1882

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TO THE

MEMORY

OF

JAMES RICE

PREFACE.

The ten years' partnership of myself and my late friend Mr. James Rice has been terminated by death. I am persuaded that nothing short of death would have put an end to a partnership which was conducted throughout with perfect accord, and without the least difference of opinion. The long illness which terminated fatally on April 25th of this year began in January of last year. There were intervals during which he seemed to be recovering and gaining strength; he was, indeed, well enough in the autumn to try change of air by a visit to Holland; but he broke down again very shortly after his return: though he did not himself suspect it, he was under sentence of death, and for the last six

months of his life his downward course was steady and continuous.

Almost the last act of his in our partnership was the arrangement, with certain country papers and elsewhere, for the serial publication of this novel, the subject and writing of which were necessarily left entirely to myself.

The many wanderings, therefore, which I undertook last summer in Stepney, Whitechapel, Poplar, St. George's-in-the-East, Limehouse, Bow, Stratford, Shadwell, and all that great and marvellous unknown country which we call East London, were undertaken, for the first time for ten years, alone. They would have been undertaken in great sadness had one foreseen the end. In one of these wanderings I had the happiness to discover Rotherhithe, which I afterwards explored with carefulness; in another, I lit upon a certain Haven of Rest for aged sea captains, among whom I found Captain Sorensen; in others I found many wonderful things, and conversed with many wonderful people. The 'single-handedness,' so to speak,

of this book would have been a mere episode in the history of the Firm, a matter of no concern or interest to the general public, had my friend recovered. But he is dead; and it therefore devolves upon me to assume the sole responsibility of the work, for good or bad. The same responsibility is, of course, assumed for the two short stories 'The Captain's Room,' published at Christmas last, and 'They were Married,' published as the summer number of the 'Illustrated London News.' The last story was, in fact, written after the death of my partner; but as it had already been announced, it was thought best, under the circumstances, to make no change in the title.

I have been told by certain friendly advisers that this story is impossible. I have, therefore, stated the fact on the title-page, so that no one may complain of being taken in or deceived. But I have never been able to understand why it is impossible.

WALTER BESANT.

UNITED UNIVERSITIES' CLUB:
August 19, 1882.

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ALL SORTS AND CONDITIONS OF MEN.

PROLOGUE.

Part I.

It was the evening of a day in early June. The time was last year, and the place was Cambridge. The sun had been visible in the heavens, a gracious presence, actually a whole week—in itself a thing remarkable; the hearts of the most soured, even of landlords and farmers, were coming to believe again in the possibility of fine weather; the clergy were beginning to think that they might this year hold a real Harvest Thanksgiving instead of a sham; the trees at the Backs were in full foliage; the avenues of Trinity and Clare were splendid; beside them the trim lawns sloped to the margin of the Cam, here most glorious and

proudest of English rivers, seeing that he laves the meadows of those ancient and venerable foundations, King's, Trinity, and St. John's, to say nothing of Queen's and Clare and Magdalen; men were lazily floating in canoes, or leaning over the bridges, or strolling about the walks, or lying on the grass; and among them —but not—oh! not with them—walked or rested many of the damsels of learned Newnham, chiefly in pairs, holding sweet converse

> On mind and art,
> And labour and the changing mart,
> And all the framework of the land;

not neglecting the foundations of the Christian faith and other fashionable topics, which ladies nowadays handle with so much learning, originality, dexterity, and power.

We have, however, to do with only one pair, who were sitting together on the banks opposite Trinity. These two were talking about a subject far more interesting than any concerning mind, or art, or philosophy, or the chances of the Senate House, or the future of Newnham: for they were talking about them-

selves and their own lives, and what they were to do each with that one life which happened, by the mere accident of birth, to belong to herself. It must be a curious subject for reflection in extreme old age, when everything has happened that is going to happen, including rheumatism, that, but for this accident, one's life might have been so very different.

'Because, Angela,' said the one who wore spectacles and looked older than she was, by reason of much pondering over books and perhaps too little exercise, 'because, my dear, we have but this one life before us, and if we make mistakes with it, or throw it away, or waste it, or lose our chances, it is such a dreadful pity. Oh, to think of the girls who drift and let every chance go by, and get nothing out of their lives at all—except babies' (she spoke of babies with great contempt). 'Oh! it seems as if every moment were precious: oh! it is a sin to waste an hour of it.'

She gasped and clasped her hands together with a sigh She was not acting, not at all; this girl was that hitherto rare thing, a girl of study and of books; she was wholly possessed,

like the great scholars of old, with the passion for learning.

'Oh! greedy person!' replied the other with a laugh, 'if you read all the books in the University library, and lose the enjoyment of sunshine, what shall it profit you, in the long run?'

This one was a young woman of much finer physique than her friend. She was not short-sighted; but possessed, in fact, a pair of orbs of very remarkable clearness, steadiness, and brightness. They were not soft eyes, nor languishing eyes, nor sleepy eyes, nor downcast, shrinking eyes; they were wideawake, brown, honest eyes, which looked fearlessly upon all things, fair or foul. A girl does not live at Newnham two years for nothing, mind you; when she leaves that seat of learning, she has changed her mind about the model, the perfect, the ideal woman. More than that, she will change the minds of her sisters and her cousins: and there are going to be a great many Newnhams; and the spread of this revolution will be rapid; and the shrinking, obedient, docile, man-reverencing, curate-worshipping maiden

of our youth will shortly vanish and be no more seen. And what will the curate do then, poor thing? Wherefore let the bishop look to certain necessary changes in the Marriage Service: and let the young men see that their own ideas change with the times, else there will be no sweethearts for them. More could I prophesy, but refrain.

This young lady owned, besides those mentioned above, many other points which will always be considered desirable at her age, what ever be the growth of feminine education (wherefore, courage, brothers!). In all these points she contrasted favourably with her companion. For her face was sunny, and fair to look upon; one of the younger clerical dons—now a scanty band, almost a Remnant—was reported to have said, after gazing upon that face, that he now understood, which he had never understood before, what Solomon meant when he compared his love's temples to a piece of a pomegranate within her locks. No one asked him what *he* meant, but he was a mathematical man, and so he must have meant something, if it was only trigonometry. As to her

figure, it was what a healthy, naturally dressed, and strong young woman's figure ought to be, and not more slender in the waist than was the figure of Venus or Mother Eve; and her limbs were elastic, so that she seemed when she walked as if she would like to run, jump, and dance, which, indeed, she would have greatly preferred, only at Newnham they 'take it out' in lawn-tennis. And whatever might be the course of life marked out by herself, it was quite certain to the intelligent observer that before long Love the invincible—Love that laughs at plots, plans, conspiracies, and designs —would upset them all, and trace out quite another line of life for her, and most probably the most commonplace line of all.

'Your life, Constance,' she went on, 'seems to me the most happy and the most fortunate. How nobly you have vindicated the intellect of women by your degree!'

'No, my dear:' Constance shook her head sadly. 'No; only partly vindicated our intellect; remember I was but fifth Wrangler, and there were four men—men, Angela—above me. I wanted to be senior.'

'Everybody knows that the fifth is always as good as the first.' Constance, however, shook her head at this daring attempt at consolation. 'At all events, Constance, you will go on to prove it by your original papers when you publish your researches. You will lecture like Hypatia: you will have the undergraduates leaving the men and crowding to your theatre. You will become the greatest mathematician in Cambridge: you will be famous for ever. You will do better than man himself, even on man's most exalted level of intellectual strength.'

The pale cheek of the student flushed.

'I do not expect to do better than men,' she replied humbly. 'It will be enough if I do as well. Yes, my dear, all my life, short or long, shall be given to science. I will have no love in it, or marriage, or—or—anything of that kind at all.'

'Nor will I,' said the other stoutly, yet with apparent effort. 'Marriage spoils a woman's career; we must live our life to its utmost, Constance.'

'We must, Angela. It is the only thing in

this world of doubt that is a clear duty. I owe mine to science. You, my dear, to——'

She would have said to 'Political Economy,' but a thought checked her. For a singular thing had happened only the day before. This friend of hers, this Angela Messenger, who had recently illustrated the strength of woman's intellect by passing a really brilliant examination in that particular science, astonished her friends at a little informal meeting in the library by an oration. In this speech she went out of her way to pour contempt upon Political Economy. It was a so-called science, she said, not a science at all: a collection of theories impossible of proof. It treated of men and women as skittles, it ignored the principal motives of action, it had been put together for the most part by doctrinaires who lived apart, and knew nothing about men and less about women, and it was the favourite study, she cruelly declared, of her own sex, because it was the most easily crammed and made the most show. As for herself, she declared that for all the good it had done her, she might just as well have gone through a course of

æsthetics or studied the symbols of advanced Ritualism.

Therefore, remembering the oration, Constance Woodcote hesitated. To what Cause (with a capital C) should Angela Messenger devote her life?

'I will tell you presently,' said Angela, 'how I shall begin my life. Where the beginning will lead me, I cannot tell.'

Then there was silence for a while. The sun sank lower and the setting rays fell upon the foliage, and every leaf showed like a leaf of gold, and the river lay in shadow and became ghostly, and the windows of Trinity library opposite to them glowed, and the New Court of St. John's at their left hand became like unto the palace of Kubla Khan.

'Oh!' sighed the young mathematician, 'I shall never be satisfied till Newnham crosses the river. We must have one of these colleges for ourselves. We must have King's. Yes, King's will be the best. And oh! how differently we shall live from the so-called students who are now smoking tobacco in each other's rooms, or playing billiards, or even cards—the superior sex!'

'As for us, we shall presently go back to our rooms, have a cup of tea and a talk, my dear. Then we shall go to bed. As regards the men, those of your mental level, Constance, do not, I suppose, play billiards; nor do they smoke tobacco. Undergraduates are not all students, remember. Most of them are nothing but mere Pass-men who will become curates.'

Two points in this speech seem to call for remark. First, the singular ignorance of mankind, common to all women, which led the girl to believe that a great man of science is superior to the pleasures of the weaker brethren; for they cannot understand the delights of fooling. The second point is—— but it may be left to those who read as they run.

Then they rose and walked slowly under the grand old trees of Trinity Avenue, facing the setting sun, so that when they came to the end and turned to the left, it seemed as if they plunged into night. And presently they came to the gates of Newnham, the newer Newnham, with its trim garden, and Queen Anne mansion. It grates upon one that the beginnings of a noble and lasting reform should be housed in

a palace built in the conceited fashion of the day. What will they say of it in fifty years, when the fashion has changed and new styles reign?

'Come,' said Angela, 'come into my room. Let my last evening in the dear place be spent with you, Constance.'

Angela's own room was daintily furnished and adorned with as many pictures, pretty things, books, and *bric-à-brac* as the narrow dimensions of a Newnham cell will allow. In a more advanced Newnham there will be two rooms for each student, and these will be larger.

The girls sat by the open window: the air was soft and sweet. A bunch of cowslips from the Coton meadows perfumed the room: there was the jug-jug of a nightingale in some tree not far off; opposite them were the lights of the other Newnham.

'The last night!' said Angela. 'I can hardly believe that I go down to-morrow.'

Then she was silent again.

'My life,' she went on, speaking softly in the twilight, 'begins to-morrow. What am I

to do with it? Your own solution seems so easy because you are clever and you have no money, while I, who am—well, dear, not devoured by thirst for learning—have got so much. To begin with, there is the Brewery. You cannot escape from a big Brewery if it belongs to you. You cannot hide it away. Messenger, Marsden, and Company's Stout, their XXX, their Old and Mild, their Bitter, their Family Ales (that particularly at eight-and-six the nine-gallon cask, if paid for on delivery), their drays, their huge horses, their strong men, whose very appearance advertises the beer, and makes the weak-kneed and the narrow-chested rush to Whitechapel—my dear, these things stare one in the face wherever you go. I am that Brewery, as you know. I am Messenger, Marsden, and Company, myself, the sole partner in what my lawyer sweetly calls the Concern. Nobody else is concerned in it. It is—alas!—my own Great Concern, a dreadful responsibility.'

'Why? Your people manage it for you.'

'Yes—oh! yes—they do. And whether they manage it badly or well I do not know;

whether they make wholesome beer or bad, whether they treat their clerks and workmen generously or meanly, whether the name of the Company is beloved or hated, I do not know. Perhaps the very making of beer at all is a wickedness.'

'But—Angela,' the other interrupted; 'it is no business of yours. Naturally, wages are regulated by supply and——'

'No, my dear. That is political economy. I prefer the good old English plan. If I employ a man, and he works faithfully, I should like that man to feel that he grows every day worth to me more than his marketable value.'

Constance was silenced.

'Then, beside the Brewery,' Angela went on, 'there is an unconscionable sum of money in the Funds.'

'There, at least,' said her friend, 'you need feel no scruple of conscience.'

'But indeed I do; for how do I know that it is right to keep all this money idle? A hundred pounds saved and put into the Funds means three pounds a year. It is like a perennial stream flowing from a hidden reservoir

in a hillside. But this stream, in my case, does no good at all. It neither fertilises the soil nor is it drunk by man or beast, nor does it turn mills, nor is it a beautiful thing to look upon, nor does its silver current flow by banks of flowers or fall in cascades. It all runs away, and makes another reservoir in another hillside. My dear, it is a stream of compound interest, which is constantly getting deeper and broader and stronger, and yet is never of the least use, and turns no wheels. Now, what am I to do with this money?'

'Endow Newnham; there, at least, is something practical.'

'I will found some scholarships, if you please, later on, when you have made your own work felt. Again, there are my houses in the East End.'

'Sell them.'

'That is only to shift the responsibility. My dear, I have streets of houses. They all lie about Whitechapel way. My grandfather, John Messenger, bought houses, I believe, just as other people buy apples, by the peck, or some larger measure, a reduction being made

on taking a quantity. There they are, and mostly inhabited.'

'You have agents, I suppose?' said Constance unsympathisingly. 'It is their duty to see that the houses are well kept.'

'Yes, I have agents. But they cannot absolve me from responsibility.'

'Then,' asked Constance, 'what do you mean to do?'

'I am a native almost of Whitechapel. My grandfather, who succeeded to the Brewery, was born there—his father was also a Brewer: his grandfather is, I believe, prehistoric: he lived there long after his son, my father, was born. When he moved to Bloomsbury Square he thought he was getting into quite a fashionable quarter; and he only went to Portman Square because he desired me to go into society. I am so rich that I shall quite certainly be welcomed in society. But, my dear, Whitechapel and its neighbourhood are my proper sphere. Why, my very name! I reek of beer; I am all beer; my blood is beer. Angela Marsden Messenger! What could more plainly declare my connection with Messenger, Marsden, and

Company? I only wonder that he did not call me Marsden-and-Company Messenger.'

'But—Angela . . .'

'He would, Constance, if he had thought of it. For, you see, I was the heiress from the very beginning, because my father died before my birth. And my grandfather intended me to become the perfect Brewer, if a woman can attain to so high an ideal. Therefore I was educated in the necessary and fitting lines. They taught me the industries of England, the arts and manufactures, mathematics, accounts, the great outlets of trade, book-keeping, mechanics—all those things that are practical. How it happened that I was allowed to learn music I do not know. Then, when I grew up, I was sent here by him, because the very air of Cambridge, he thought, makes people exact; and women are so prone to be inexact. I was to read while I was here all the books about Political and Social Economy. I have also learned for business purposes two or three languages. I am now finished. I know all the theories about people, and I don't believe any of them will work. Therefore, my dear,

I shall get to know the people before I apply them.'

'Was your grandfather a student of Political Economy?'

'Not at all. But he had a respect for justice, and he wanted me to be just. It is so difficult, he used to say, for a woman to be just. For either she flies into a rage and punishes with excess, or she takes pity and forgives. As for himself, he was as hard as nails, and the people knew it.'

'And your project?'

'It is very simple. I efface myself. I vanish. I disappear.'

'What?'

'If anybody asks where I am, no one will know, except you, my dear; and you will not tell.'

'You will be in——'

'In Whitechapel, or thereabouts. Your Angela will be a dressmaker, and she will live by herself, and become—what her great-grandmother was—one of the people.'

'You will not like it at all.'

'Perhaps not; but I am weary of theories,

facts, statistics. I want flesh and blood. I want to feel myself a part of this striving, eager, anxious humanity, on whose labours I live in comfort, by whom I have been educated, to whom I owe all, and for whom I have done nothing—no, nothing at all, selfish wretch that I am!'

She clasped her hands with a fine gesture of remorse.

'Oh! woman of science,' she cried; 'you sit upon the heights, and you can disregard—because it is your right—the sorrows and the joys of the world. But I cannot. I belong to the People—with a great, big P, my dear—I cannot bear to go on living by their toil and giving nothing in return. What a dreadful thing is a She-Dives!'

'I confess,' said Constance, coldly, 'that I have always regarded wealth as a means for leading the higher life—the life of study and research—unencumbered by the sordid aims and mean joys of the vulgar herd.'

'It is possible and right for you to live apart, my dear. It is impossible, because it would be wrong, for me.'

'But—alone? You will venture into the dreadful region alone?'

'Quite alone, Constance.'

'And—and—your reputation, Angela?'

Angela laughed merrily.

'As for my reputation, my dear, it may take care of itself. Those of my friends who think I am not to be trusted may transfer their affection to more worthy objects. The first thing in the emancipation of the sex, Constance, is equal education. The next is——'

'What?' for Angela paused.

She drew forth from her pocket a small bright instrument of steel, which glittered in the twilight. Not a revolver, dear readers.

'The next,' she said, brandishing the weapon before Constance's eyes, 'is—the LATCH-KEY.'

PROLOGUE.

Part II.

The time was eleven in the forenoon; the season was the month of roses; the place was a room on the first floor at the Park-end of Piccadilly—a noisy room, because the windows were open, and there was a great thunder and rattle of cabs, omnibuses, and all kinds of vehicles. When this noise became, as it sometimes did, intolerable, the occupant of the room shut his double windows, and immediately there was a great calm, with a melodious roll of distant wheels, like the buzzing of bees about the marigolds on a summer afternoon. With the double window a man may calmly sit down amid even the roar of Cheapside, or the never-ending cascade of noise at Charing Cross.

The room was furnished with taste; the books on the shelves were well bound, as if the

owner took a proper pride in them, as indeed was the case. There were two or three good pictures: there was a girl's head in marble; there were cards and invitations lying on the mantelshelf and in a rack beside the clock. Everybody could tell at the first look of the room that it was a bachelor's den. Also because nothing was new, and because there were none of the peacockeries, whims and fancies, absurdities, fads and fashions, gimcrackeries—the presence of which does always and infallibly proclaim the chamber of a young man—this room manifestly belonged to a bachelor who was old in the profession. In fact, the owner of the chambers, of which this was the breakfast, morning, and dinner room, whenever he dined at home, was seated in an armchair beside a breakfast table, looking straight before him, with a face filled with anxiety. An honest, ugly, pleasing, rugged, attractive face, whose features were carved one day when Dame Nature was benevolently disposed, but had a blunt chisel.

'I always told him,' he muttered, 'that he should learn the whole of his family history as

soon as he was three-and-twenty years of age. One must keep such promises. Yet it would have been better that he should never know. But then it might have been found out, and that would have been far worse. Yet, how could it have been found out? No; that is ridiculous.'

He mused in silence. In his fingers he held a cigar which he had lit, but allowed to go out again. The morning paper was lying on the table, unopened.

'How will the boy take it?' he asked; 'will he take it crying? Or will he take it laughing?'

He smiled, picturing to himself the 'boy's' astonishment.

Looking at the man more closely, one became aware that he was really a very pleasant-looking person. He was about five-and-forty years of age, and he wore a full beard and moustache, after the manner of his contemporaries, with whom a beard is still considered a manly ornament to the face. The beard was brown, but it had begun to show, as wine merchants say of port, the 'appearance of age.'

In some light, there was more grey than brown. His dark-brown hair, however, retained its original thickness of thatch, and was as yet untouched by any streak of grey. Seeing that he belonged to one of the oldest and best of English families, one might have expected something of that delicacy of feature which some of us associate with birth. But, as has already been said, his face was rudely chiselled, his complexion was ruddy, and he looked as robust as a ploughboy; yet he had the air of an English gentleman, and that ought to satisfy anybody. And he was the younger son of a Duke, being by courtesy Lord Jocelyn Le Breton.

While he was thus meditating, there was a quick step on the stair, and the subject of his thoughts entered the room.

This interesting young man was a much more aristocratic person to look upon than his senior. He paraded, so to speak, at every point, the thoroughbred air. His thin and delicate nose, his clear eye, his high though narrow forehead, his well-cut lip, his firm chin, his pale cheek, his oval face, the slim figure,

the thin, long fingers, the spring of his walk, the poise of his head—what more could one expect even from the descendant of All the Howards? But this morning the pallor of his cheek was flushed as if with some disquieting news.

'Good morning, Harry,' said Lord Jocelyn quietly.

Harry returned the greeting. Then he threw upon the table a small packet of papers.

'There, sir, I have read them; thank you for letting me see them.'

'Sit down, boy, and let us talk; will you have a cigar? No? A cigarette, then? No? You are probably a little upset by this—new—unexpected revelation?'

'A *little* upset!' repeated the young man, with a short laugh.

'To be sure—to be sure—one could expect nothing else; now sit down, and let us talk over the matter calmly.'

The young man sat down, but he did not present the appearance of one inclined to talk over the matter calmly.

'In novels,' said Lord Jocelyn, 'it is always

the good fortune of young gentlemen brought up in ignorance of their parentage to turn out, when they do discover their origin, the heirs to an illustrious name; I have always admired that in novels. In your case, my poor Harry, the reverse is the case; the distinction ought to console you.'

'Why was I not told before?'

'Because the boyish brain is more open to prejudice than that of the adult: because, among your companions, you certainly would have felt at a disadvantage had you known yourself to be the son of a——'

'You always told me,' said Harry, 'that my father was in the army!'

'What do you call a Sergeant in a line regiment, then?'

'Oh! of course, but among gentlemen—I mean—among the set with whom I was brought up, to be in the army means to have a commission.'

'Yes; that was my pardonable deception. I thought that you would respect yourself more if you felt that your father, like the fathers of your friends, belonged to the upper class.

Now, my dear boy, you will respect yourself just as much, although you know that he was but a Sergeant, and a brave fellow who fell at my side in the Indian Mutiny.'

'And my mother?'

'I did not know her; she was dead before I found you out, and took you from your Uncle Bunker.'

'Uncle Bunker!' Harry laughed, with a little bitterness. 'Uncle Bunker! Fancy asking one's Uncle Bunker to dine at the club! What is he by trade?'

'He is something near a big Brewery, a Brewery Boom, as the Americans say. What he actually is, I do not quite know. He lives, if I remember rightly, at a place, an immense distance from here, called Stepney.'

'Do you know anything more about my father's family?'

'No! the Sergeant was a tall, handsome, well set-up man; but I know nothing about his connections. His name, if that is any help to you, was, was—in fact'—here Lord Jocelyn assumed an air of ingratiating sweetness—'was —Goslett—Goslett; not a bad name, I think,

pronounced with perhaps a leaning to an accent on the last syllable. Don't you agree with me, Harry?'

'Oh! yes, it will do. Better than Bunker, and not so good as Le Breton. As for my Christian name, now?'

'There I ventured on one small variation.'

'Am I not, then, even Harry?'

'Yes, yes, yes, you are—now; formerly you were Harry without the aitch. It is the custom of the neighbourhood in which you were born.'

'I see! If I go back among my own people, I shall be, then, once more 'Arry?'

'Yes; and shout on penny steamers, and brandish pint bottles of stout, and sing along the streets, in simple abandonment to Arcadian joy; and trample on flowers; and break pretty things for wantonness; and exercise a rude but effective wit, known among the ancients as Fescennine, upon passing ladies; and get drunk o' nights; and walk the streets with a pipe in your mouth. That is what you would be, if you went back, my dear child.'

Harry laughed.

'After all,' he said, 'this is a very difficult position. I can no longer go about pretending anything; I must tell people.'

'Is that absolutely necessary?'

'Quite necessary. It will be a deuce of a business, explaining.'

'Shall we tell it to one person, and let him be the town crier?'

'That, I suppose, would be the best plan; meantime, I could retire, while I made some plans for the future.'

'Perhaps, if you really must tell the truth, it would be well to go out of town for a bit.'

'As for myself,' Harry continued, 'I suppose I shall get over the wrench after a bit. Just for the moment I feel knocked out of time.'

'Keep the secret, then; let it be one between you and me only, Harry; let no one know.'

But he shook his head.

'Everybody must know. Those who refuse to keep up the acquaintance of a private soldier's son—well, then, a non-commissioned officer's son—will probably let me know their

decision, some way or other. Those who do not——' he paused.

'Nonsense, boy; who cares nowadays what a man is by birth? Is not this great city full of people who go anywhere, and are nobody's sons? Look here, and here'—he tossed half-a-dozen cards of invitation across the table—'can you tell me who these people were twenty years ago—or these—or these?'

'No: I do not care in the least who they were. I care only that they shall know who I am; I will not, for my part, pretend to be what I am not.'

'I believe you are right, boy. Let the world laugh if they please, and have done with it.'

Harry began to walk up and down the room; he certainly did not look the kind of man to give in: to try hiding things away. Quite the contrary. And he laughed—he took it laughing.

'I suppose it will sound comic at first,' he said, 'until people get used to it. Do you know what he turns out to be? That kind of thing: after all, we think too much about what

people say—what does it matter what they say or how they say it? If they like to laugh, they can. Who shall be the town crier?'

'I was thinking,' said Lord Jocelyn slowly, 'of calling to-day upon Lady Wimbledon.'

The young man laughed, with a little heightening of his colour.

'Of course—a very good person, an excellent person, and to-morrow it will be all over London—there are one or two things,' he went on after a moment, 'that I do not understand from the papers which you put into my hands last night.'

'What are those things?' Lord Jocelyn for a moment looked uneasy.

'Well—perhaps it is impertinent to ask. But—when Mr. Bunker, the respectable Uncle Bunker, traded me away, what did he get for me?'

'Every bargain has two sides,' said Lord Jocelyn. 'You know what I got, you want to know what the honourable Bunker got. Harry, on that point I must refer you to the gentleman himself.'

'Very good. Then I come to the next

difficulty—a staggerer. What did you do it for? One moment, sir—' for Lord Jocelyn seemed about to reply. 'One moment. You were rich, you were well born, you were young. What on earth made you pick a boy out of the gutter and bring him up like a gentleman?'

'You are twenty-three, Harry, and yet you ask for motives. My dear boy, have you not learned the golden rule? In all human actions look for the basest motive, and attribute that. If you see any reason for stopping short of quite the lowest spurs to action, such as revenge, hatred, malice, and envy, suppose the next lowest, and you will be quite safe. That next lowest is—*son altesse, ma vanité.*'

'Oh!' replied Harry, 'yet I fail to see how a child of the lowest classes could supply any satisfaction for even the next lowest of human motives.'

'It was partly in this way. Mind, I do not for one moment pretend to answer the whole of your question. Men's motives, thank heaven, are so mixed up, that no one can be quite a saint, while no one is altogether a sinner. Nature is a leveller, which is a comfort to us

who are born in levelling times. In those days I was by way of being a kind of Radical. Not a Radical such as those who delight mankind in these happier days. But I had Liberal leanings, and thought I had ideas. When I was a boy of twelve or so, there were the '48 theories floating about the air; some of them got into my brain and stuck there. Men used to believe that a great time was coming—perhaps I heard a whisper of it; perhaps I was endowed with a greater faculty for credulity than my neighbours, and believed in humanity. However, I do not seek to explain. It may have occurred to me—I do not say it did—but I have a kind of recollection as if it did—one day after I had seen you, then in the custody of the respectable Bunker, that it would be an instructive and a humorous thing to take a boy of the multitude and bring him up in all the culture, the tastes, the ideas of ourselves—you and me, for instance, Harry. This idea may have seized upon me, so that the more I thought of it, the better pleased I was with it. I may have pictured such a boy so taught, so brought up, with such tastes, returning to his

own people. Disgust, I may have said, will make him a prophet; and such a prophet as the world has never yet seen. He would be like a follower of the Old Man of the Mountain. He would never cease to dream of the paradise he had seen: he would never cease to tell of it; he would be always leading his friends upward to the same levels on which he had once stood.'

'Humph!' said Harry.

'Yes, I know,' Lord Jocelyn went on. 'I ought to have foretold that the education I prepared for you would have unfitted you for the *rôle* of prophet. I am not disappointed in you, Harry—quite the reverse. I now see that what has happened has been only what I should have expected. By some remarkable accident, you possess an appearance such as is generally believed to belong to persons of long-continued gentle descent. By a still more remarkable accident, all your tastes prove to be those of the cultured classes; the blood of the Goslett's and the Bunkers has, in yourself, assumed the most azure hue.'

'That is very odd,' said Harry.

'It is a very remarkable thing, indeed,' continued Lord Jocelyn gravely. 'I have never ceased to wonder at this phenomenon. However, I was unable to send you to a public school on account of the necessity, as I thought, of concealing your parentage. But I gave you instruction of the best, and found for you companions—as you know, among the——'

'Yes,' said Harry. 'My companions were gentlemen, I suppose; I learned from them.'

'Perhaps. Still, the earthenware pot cannot become a brass pot, whatever he may pretend. You were good metal from the beginning.'

'You are now, Harry,' he went on, 'three-and-twenty. You are master of three foreign languages; you have travelled on the Continent and in America; you are a good rider, a good shot, a good fencer, a good dancer. You can paint a little, fiddle a little, dance a great deal, act pretty well, speak pretty well; you can, I dare say, make love as becomes a gentleman; you can write very fair verses; you are good-looking; you have the *air noble*; you are not a prig; you are not an æsthete; you possess your share of common sense.'

'One thing you have omitted which, at the present juncture, may be more useful than any of these things.'

'What is that?'

'You were good enough to give me a lathe, and to have me instructed in the mysteries of turning. I am a practical cabinet-maker, if need be.'

'But why should this be of use to you?'

'Because, Lord Jocelyn'—Harry ran and leaned over the table with a sweet smile of determination on his face—'because I am going back to my own people for a while, and it may be that the trade of cabinet-making may prove a very backbone of strength to me among them——'

'Harry—you would not—indeed, you could not go back to Bunker?' Lord Jocelyn asked this question with every outward appearance of genuine alarm.

'I certainly would. My very kind guardian and patron, would you stand in my way? I want to see those people from where I am sprung: I want to learn how they differ from you and your kin. I must compare myself

with them—I must prove the brotherhood of humanity.'

'You will go? Yes—I see you will—it is in your eyes. Go then, Harry. But return to me soon. The slender fortune of a younger son shall be shared with you so long as I live, and given to you when I die. Do not stay among them. There are, indeed—at least, I suppose so,—all sorts and conditions of men. But to me, and to men brought up like you and me, I do not understand how there can be any but one sort and one condition. Come back soon, boy. Believe me—no—do not believe me—prove it yourself; in the social pyramid, the greatest happiness, Harry, lies near the top.'

CHAPTER I.

NEWS FOR HIS LORDSHIP.

'I HAVE news for your lordship,' said Mrs. Bormalack, at the breakfast table, 'something that will cheer you up a bit. We are to have an addition to our family.'

His lordship nodded his head, meaning that he would receive her news without more delay than was necessary, but that at present his mind was wholly occupied with a contest between one of his teeth and a crust. The tooth was an outlying one, all its lovely companions having withered and gone, and it was undefended; the crust was unyielding. For the moment no one could tell what might be the result.

Her ladyship replied for him.

Lady Davenant was a small woman, if you go by inches; her exalted rank gave her, how-

ever, a dignity designed for very much larger persons; yet she carried it with ease. She was by no means young, and her hair was thin as well as grey; her face, which was oval and delicately curved, might formerly have been beautiful; the eyes were bright and eager, and constantly in motion, as is often the case with restless and nervous persons; her lips were thin and as full of independent action as her eyes; she had thin hands, so small that they might have belonged to a child of eight; and she might boast, when inclined for vaunting, the narrowest and most sloping shoulders that ever were seen, so sloping that people unaccustomed to her were wont to tremble lest the whole of her dress should suddenly slide straight down those shoulders, as down a slope of ice; and strange ladies, impelled by this apprehension, had been known to ask her in a friendly whisper if she could thoroughly depend upon the pins at her throat. As Mrs. Bormalack often said, speaking of her noble boarders among her friends, those shoulders of her ladyship were Quite a Feature. Next to the pride of having at her table such guests—

who, however, did not give in to the good old English custom of paying double prices for having a title—was the distinction of pointing to those unique shoulders and of talking about them.

Her ladyship had a shrill, reedy voice, and spoke loudly. It was remarked by the most superficial observer, moreover, that she possessed a very strong American accent.

'At our first boarding-house,' she said, replying indirectly to the landlady's remark, 'at our first boarding-house, which was in Wellclose Square, next to the Board Schools, there was a man who once *actually* slapped his lordship on the back. And then he laughed! To be sure, he was only a Dane, but the disrespect was just the same.'

'My dear,' said his lordship, who now spoke, having compromised matters with the crust, 'the ignominy of being slapped on the back by a powerful sea captain is hardly to be weighed in comparison with the physical pain it causes.'

'We are quite sure, however, Mrs. Bormalack,' the lady went on, 'that you will admit

none under your roof but those prepared to respect rank; we want no levellers or mischievous Radicals for our companions.'

'It is to be a young lady,' said Mrs. Bormalack.

'Young ladies, at all events, do not slap gentlemen on the back, whether they are noblemen or not,' said his lordship kindly. 'We shall be happy to welcome her, ma'am.'

This ornament of the Upper House was a big, fat man, with a face like a full moon. His features were not distinctly aristocratic; his cheeks were flabby and his nose broad; also he had a double chin. His long hair was a soft, creamy white, the kind of white which in old age follows a manhood of red hair. He sat in an arm-chair at the end of the table, with his elbows on the arms, as if he desired to get as much rest out of the chair as possible. His eyes were very soft and dreamy; his expression was that of a man who has been accustomed to live in the quieter parts of the world. He, too, spoke with a marked American accent and with slowness, as if measuring his words and appreciating himself their importance. The

dignity of his manner was not wholly due to his position, but in great measure to his former profession. For his lordship had not always rejoiced in his present dignity, nor, in fact, had he been brought up to it. Persons intending to become peers of Great Britain do not, as a rule, first spend more than forty years as schoolmasters in their native town. And just as clergymen, and especially young clergymen, love to talk loud, because it makes people remember that they are in the presence of those whose wisdom demands attention, so old schoolmasters speak slowly because their words —even the lightest, which are usually pretty heavy — have got to be listened to, under penalties.

As soon, however, as he began to 'enjoy the title,' the ex-schoolmaster addressed himself with some care to the cultivation of a manner which he thought due to his position. It was certainly pompous; it was intended to be affable; it was naturally, because he was a man of a most kind disposition and an excellent heart, courteous and considerate.

'I am rejoiced, Mrs. Bormalack,' he went

on grandly, and with a bow, 'that we are to be cheered in our domestic circle by the addition of a young lady. It is an additional proof, if any were needed, of the care with which you consider the happiness of your guests.' The Professor, who owed for five weeks, murmured that no one felt it more than himself. 'Sometimes, ma'am, I own that even with the delightful society of yourself' ('oh, my lord, your lordship is too kind,' said Mrs. Bormalack) 'and of the accomplished Professor,'—here he bowed to the Professor, who nodded and spread out his hands professionally, 'and of the learned Mr. Daniel Fagg,'—here he bowed to Mr. Fagg, who took no notice at all, because he was thinking of his triangles and was gazing straight before him—'and of Mr. Josephus Coppin,'—here he bowed to Josephus Coppin, who humbly inclined his head without a smile, 'and of Mr. Maliphant,'—here he bowed to Mr. Maliphant, who with a breakfast-knife was trying to make a knobly crust assume the shape of a human head, in fact, the head of Mr. Gladstone, 'and of Mr. Harry Goslett, who is not with us so much as we could desire of so

sprightly a young man; and surrounded as we are by all the gaiety and dissipation and splendour of London, I sometimes suspect that we are not always so cheerful as we might be.'

'Give me,' said his wife, folding her little hands and looking round her with a warlike expression, as if inviting contradiction, 'give me Canaan City, New Hampshire, for gaiety.'

Nobody combated this position, nor did anybody reply at all, unless the pantomime of the Professor was intended for a reply by gesture, like the learned Thaumast. For, with precision and abstracted air, he rolled up a little ball of bread, about as big as a marble, placed it in the palm of his left hand, closed his fingers upon it, and then opened them, showing that the ball had vanished. Then he executed the slightest possible shrug of his shoulders, spread out his hands, and nodded to his lordship, saying, with a sweet smile,—

'Pretty thing, isn't it?'

'I hope, sir, that she will be pretty,' said his lordship, thinking of the young lady. 'To look at a pretty face is as good as a day of sunshine.'

'She is a beautiful girl,' Mrs. Bormalack replied with enthusiasm, 'and I am sure she must be as good as she is pretty; because she paid three months in advance. With a piano, too, which she will play herself. She is a dressmaker by trade, and she wants to set herself up in a genteel way. And she's got a little money, she says;' a sweet smile crossed her face as she thought that most of this little money would probably come into her own pocket.

'A dressmaker!' cried her ladyship. 'Do tell! I was in that line myself before I married. That was long before we began to enjoy the title. You don't know, ma'am'—here she dropped her voice—'you don't know how remarkably fond his lordship is of a pretty face; choice with them, too. Not every face pleases him. Oh! you wouldn't believe how particular. Which shows his aristocratic descent; because we all know what his ancestors were.'

'To be sure,' said the landlady, nodding significantly. 'We all know what they were. Rovers to a man—I mean a lord. And as for the young lady, she will be here this evening, in time for tea. Shrimps and Sally Lunn,

my lord. And her name is Miss Kennedy. Respectable, if poor; and illustrious ancestors is more than we can all of us have, nor yet deserve.'

Here the Professor rose, having finished his breakfast. One might have noticed that he had extremely long and delicate fingers, and that they seemed always in movement; also that he had a way of looking at you as if he meant you to look straight and steady into his eyes, and not to go rolling your eyes about in the frivolous, irresponsible way affected by some people. He walked slowly to the window; then, as if seized with an irresistible impulse to express his feelings in pantomime, or else, it may be, to try an experiment, returned to the table, and asked for the loan of his lordship's pocket-handkerchief, which was a large red silk one, well fitted for the purpose. How he conveyed a saucer unseen from the table into that handkerchief, and how that saucer got into the nobleman's coat-tail pocket, were things known only to himself. Yet familiarity breeds contempt, and though everybody looked on, nobody expressed delight or

astonishment, for this exhibition of magic and spells went on every day, and whenever the Professor was among them. He moved about accompanied, so to speak, by a legion of invisible attendants and servants, who conveyed, hid, brought back, uncovered, discovered, recovered, lost, found, rapped, groaned, cried, whistled, sang, moved chairs and tables, and, in fact, behaved as only a troop of well-drilled elves can behave. He was a young man of twenty-five, and he had a great gift of silence. By trade he was a Professor of legerdemain. Other Professors there are who hold up the light of this science, and hand it down to posterity undimmed; but none with such an ardent love for their work as Professor Climo. For he practised all day long, except when he was reading the feats of the illustrious conjurers, sorcerers, necromancers, and wizards of old time, or inventing new combinations, traps for the credulous, and contrivances to make that which was not seen like unto that which was. The East End of London is not the richest field for such performers; but he was young, and he lived in hope—very often, when there

were no engagements—upon it. At such times he became a simple lodger, instead of a boarder, at Mrs. Bormalack's, and went without any meals.

The situation of this boarding-house, poetically described by his lordship as in the midst of the gaiety of London, was in the far East, in that region of London which is less known to Englishmen than if it were situated in the wildest part of Colorado, or among the pine forests of British Columbia. It stood, in fact, upon Stepney Green, a small strip of Eden which has been visited by few, indeed, of those who do not live in its immediate vicinity. Yet, it is a romantic spot.

Two millions of people, or thereabouts, live in the East End of London. That seems a good-sized population for an utterly unknown town. They have no institutions of their own to speak of, no public buildings of any importance, no municipality, no gentry, no carriages, no soldiers, no picture-galleries, no theatres, no opera—they have nothing. It is the fashion to believe that they are all paupers, which is a foolish and mischievous belief, as we shall pre-

sently see. Probably there is no such spectacle in the whole world as that of this immense, neglected, forgotten great city of East London. It is even neglected by its own citizens, who have never yet perceived their abandoned condition. They are Londoners, it is true, but they have no part or share of London; its wealth, its splendours, its honours exist not for them. They see nothing of any splendours; even the Lord Mayor's show goeth westward: the city lies between them and the greatness of England. They are beyond the wards, and cannot become aldermen; the rich London merchants go north and south and west; but they go not east. Nobody goes east; no one wants to see the place; no one is curious about the way of life in the east. Books on London pass it over; it has little or no history; great men are not buried in its churchyards, which are not even ancient, and crowded by citizens as obscure as those who now breathe the upper airs about them. If anything happens in the east, people at the other end have to stop and think before they can remember where the place may be.

The house was old, built of red bricks with a 'shell' decoration over the door. It contained room for about eight boarders, who had one sitting-room in common. This was the breakfast-room, a meal at which all were present; the dining-room—but nobody except his lordship and his wife dined at home; the tea-room—but tea was too early for most of the boarders; and the supper-room. After supper tobacco was tolerated. The boarders were generally men, and mostly elderly men of staid and quiet manners, with whom the evening pipe was the conclusion and solace of the day. It was not like the perpetual incense of a tap-room, and yet the smell of tobacco was never absent from the room, lingering about the folds of the dingy curtain, which served for both summer and winter, clinging to the horsehair sofa, to the leather of the chairs, and to the rusty table-cloth.

The furniture was old and mean. The wall-paper had once been crimson, but was now only dark; the ceiling had for many years wanted white-washing badly; the door and windows wanted painting; the windows always

wanted cleaning; the rope of one of the blinds was broken; and the blind itself, not nearly so white as it might have been, was pinned half-way up. Everything was shabby; everything wanted polishing, washing, brightening up.

A couple of arm-chairs stood, when meals were not going on, one on either side of the fireplace—one being reserved for his lordship, and the other for his wife; they were, like the sofa, of horsehair, and slippery. There was a long table covered by a faded red cloth; the carpet was a Brussels once of a warm crimson, now worn threadbare; the hearthrug was worn into holes; one or two of the chairs had broken out and showed glimpses of stuffing. The sideboard was of old-fashioned build, and a shiny black by reason of its age; there were two or three hanging shelves filled with books, the property of his lordship, who loved reading; the mantel-shelf was decorated by a small collection of pipes; and above it hung a portrait of the late Samuel Bormalack, formerly a Collector in the great Brewing House of Messenger, Marsden and Company.

His widow, who carried on the house, was

a comfortable—a serenely comfortable woman, who regarded the world from the optimist's point of view. Perfect health and a tolerably prosperous business, where the returns are regular though the profits are small, make the possessor agree with Pope and Candide that everything is for the best in this best of all possible worlds. Impossible not to be contented, happy, and religious, when your wishes are narrowed to a tidy dinner, a comfortable supper with a little something hot, boarders who pay up regular, do not grumble, and go to bed sober; and a steady hope that you will not 'get something,' by which of course is meant that you may not fall ill of any disagreeable or painful disease. To 'get something' is one of the pretty euphemisms of our daily speech.

She had had one or two unlucky accidents, such as the case of Captain Saffrey, who stayed two months, and drank enough beer to float a three-decker, and then sailed away, promising to pay, and would have done so—for he was an honest man—but had the misfortune to fall overboard while in liquor. But her present

boarders seemed most respectable, and she was at ease.

Of course, the persons of greatest consideration among them were the noble pair who enjoyed the title. Rank is respected, if you please, even at the East End of London, and perhaps more there than in fashionable quarters, because it is so rare. King John, it is true, had once a palace at Stepney; but that is a long time to look back upon, and even the oldest inhabitant can now not remember to have been kicked by the choleric monarch. Then the Marquis of Worcester had once a great house here, what time the sainted Charles was ripening things for a row Royal. That house is gone too, and I do not know where it used to stand. From the time of this East End Marquis to the arrival of Lord and Lady Davenant, last year, there have been no resident members of the English aristocracy, and no member of the foreign nobility, with the exception of a certain dusky Marquis of Choufleur, from Hayti, who is reported on good authority to have once lived in these parts for six months, thinking he was in the politest and

most fashionable suburb of London. He is further said to have carried on with Satanic wildness in Limehouse and the West India Dock Road of an evening. A Japanese, too, certainly once went to an hotel in America Square, which is not quite the East End, and said he was a Prince in his own country. He stayed a week, and drank champagne all day long. Then he decamped without paying the bill; and when the landlord went to the Embassy to complain, he thought it was the Ambassador himself, until he discovered that all Japanese are exactly alike. Wherefore he desisted from any further attempt to identify the missing Prince for want of the missing link, namely, some distinctive feature.

The illustrious pair had now been in the House for six weeks. Previously they had spent some time in Wellclose Square, which is no doubt well known to fashionable readers, and lies contiguous to St. George's Street. Here happened that accident of the back-slapping so feelingly alluded to by her ladyship. They were come from America to take up an old family title which had been in abeyance

for two or three generations. They appeared to be poor, but able to find the modest weekly sum asked by Mrs. Bormalack; and in order to secure her confidence and goodwill, they paid every week in advance. They drank nothing but water, but, to make up, his lordship ate a great deal, especially at breakfast, and they asked for strange things, unknown to English households. In other respects they gave no kind of trouble, were easily satisfied, never grumbled, and were affable. For their rank they certainly dressed shabbily, but high social station is sometimes found coupled with eccentricity. Doubtless Lord Davenant had his reasons for going about in a coat white at the seams and shiny at the back, which, being made of sympathetic stuff, and from long habit, had assumed the exact shape of his noble back and shoulders, with a beautiful model of his illustrious elbows. For similarly good and sufficient reasons Lady Davenant wore that old black gown and those mended gloves and——; but it is cruel to enumerate the shortcomings of her attire.

Perhaps on account of his public character,

the Professor would rank in the House after his lordship. Nothing confers greatness more quickly than an unabashed appearance upon a platform. Mr. Maliphant, however, who had travelled and could relate tales of adventure, might dispute precedence with him. He was now a carver of figure-heads for ships. It is an old and honourable trade, but in these latter days it has decayed. He had a small yard at Limehouse, where he worked all by himself, turning out heads in the rough, so that they might be transformed into the beauteous goddess Venus, or a Saucy Poll, or a bearded Neptune, as the owners might prefer. He was now an old man, with a crumpled and million-lined face, but active still and talkative. His memory played him tricks, and he took little interest in new things. He had a habit, too, which disconcerted people unaccustomed to him, of thinking one part of a reminiscence to himself and saying the rest aloud, so that one got only the torso or mangled trunk of the story, or the head, or the feet, with or without the tail, which is the point.

The learned Daniel Fagg, rapt always in

contemplation, was among them but not of them. He was lately arrived from Australia, bringing with him a Discovery which took away the breath of those who heard it, and filled all the scholars and learned men of Europe with envy and hatred, so that they combined and formed a general conspiracy to keep him down, and to prevent the publication of his great book, lest the world should point the finger of scorn at them, and laugh at the blindness of its great ones. Daniel himself said so, and an oppressed man generally knows his oppressor. He went away every morning after breakfast, and returned for tea. He was believed to occupy the day in spreading a knowledge of his Discovery, the nature of which was unknown at the boarding-house, among clergymen and other scholars. In the evening he sat over a Hebrew Bible and a dictionary, and spoke to no one. A harmless man, but soured and disappointed with the cold reception of his Great Discovery.

Another boarder was the unfortunate Josephus Coppin, who was a clerk in the great brewing-house of Messenger, Marsden and

Company. He had been there for forty years, being now fifty-five years of age, grey, and sad of face, because, for a certain well known reason, he was not advanced, but remained for ever among the juniors at a salary of thirty shillings a week. Other men of his own standing were Chief Brewers, Collectors, and Chief Accountants. He was almost where he had started. The young men came and mounted the ladder of promotion, passing him one after the other; he alone remained upon the rung which he had reached one day, now thirty years bygone, when a certain thing happened, the consequences of which were to keep him down, to ruin his prospects, to humiliate and degrade him, to sadden and embitter his whole life. Lastly, there was a young man, the only young man among them, one Harry Goslett by name, who had quite recently joined the boarding-house. He was a nephew of Mr. Coppin, and was supposed to be looking for a place of business.

But he was an uncertain boarder. He paid for his dinner, but never dined at home; he had brought with him a lathe, which he set up

in a little garden-house, and here he worked by himself, but in a fitful, lazy way, as if it mattered nothing whether he worked or not. He seemed to prefer strolling about the place, looking around him as if he had never seen things before, and he was wont to speak of familiar objects as if they were strange and rare. These eccentricities were regarded as due to his having been to America. A handsome young man and cheerful, which made it a greater pity that he was so idle.

On this morning the first to start for the day's business was Daniel Fagg. He put his Hebrew Bible on the bookshelf, took out a memorandum-book and the stump of a pencil, made an entry, and then counted out his money, which amounted to eight-and-sixpence, with a sigh. He was a little man, about sixty years of age, and his thin hair was sandy in colour. His face was thin, and he looked hungry and under-fed. I believe, in fact, that he seldom had money enough for dinner, and so went without. Nothing was remarkable in his face, except a pair of very large and thick

eyebrows, also of sandy hue, which is unusual, and produces a very curious effect. With these he was wont to frown tremendously as he went along, frightening the little children into fits; when he was not frowning, he looked dejected. It must have been an unhappy condition of things which made the poor man thus alternate between wrath and depression. There were, however, moments—those when he got hold of a new listener—in which he would light up with enthusiasm as he detailed the history of his Discovery. Then the thin, drawn cheek would fill out, and his quivering lips would become firm, and his dejected eyes would brighten with the old pride of discovery, and he would laugh once more, and rub his hands with pride, when he described the honest sympathy of the people in the Australian township, where he first announced the great Revelation he was to make to the world, and received their enthusiastic cheers and shouts of encouragement.

Harry Goslett was his last listener, and, as the enthusiast thought, his latest convert.

As Daniel passed out of the dining-room,

and was looking for his hat among a collection of hats as bad as was ever seen out of Canadian backwoods, Harry Goslett himself came downstairs, his hands in his pockets, as slowly and lazily as if there was no such thing as work to do or time to keep. He laughed and nodded to the discoverer.

'Oho! Dan'l,' he said; 'how are the triangles? and are you really going back to the Lion's Den?'

'Yes, Mr. Goslett, I am going back there! I am not afraid of them; I am going to see the Head of the Egyptian Department. He says he will give me a hearing; they all said they would, and they have. But they won't listen; it's no use to hear unless you listen. What a dreadful thing is jealousy among the learned, Mr. Goslett!'

'It is indeed, my Prophet; have they subscribed to the book?'

'No! they won't subscribe. Is it likely that they will help to bring out a work which proves them all wrong? Come, sir, even at your age you can't think so well of poor humanity.'

'Daniel—' the young man laid his hands impressively upon the little man's shoulders—'you showed me yesterday a list of forty-five subscribers to your book, at twelve shillings and sixpence apiece. *Where is that subscription-money?*'

The poor man blushed, and hung his head.

'A man must live,' he said at length, trying to frown fiercely.

'Yes, but unpleasant notice is sometimes taken of the way in which people live, my dear friend. This is not a free country; not by any means free. If I were you, I would take the triangles back to Australia, and print the book there, among your friends.'

'No!' The little man stamped on the ground, and rammed his head into his hat with determination. 'No, Mr. Goslett, and no again. It shall be printed here. I will hurl it at the head of the so-called scholars here, in London—in their stronghold, close to the British Museum. Besides'—here he relaxed, and turned a pitiful face of sorrow and shame upon his adviser—'besides, can I forget the day when I left Australia? They all came

aboard to say good-bye. The papers had paragraphs about it. They shouted one after the other, and nobblers went around surprising, and they slapped me on the back and said, "Go, Dan'l," or "Go, Fagg," or "Go, Mr. Fagg," according to their intimacy and the depth of their friendship—"Go where honour and glory and a great fortune, with a pension on the Queen's Civil List, are waiting for you." On the voyage I even dreamed of a title; I thought Sir Daniel Fagg, Knight or Baronet, or the Right Reverend Lord Fagg, would sound well to go back to Australia with. Honour? Glory? Fortune? where are they? Eight-and-sixpence in my pocket; and the Head of the Greek Department calls me a fool, because I won't acknowledge that truth—yes, TRUTH—is error. Laughs at the triangles, Mr. Goslett!'

He laughed bitterly and went out, slamming the door behind him.

Then Harry entered the breakfast-room, nodding pleasantly to everybody; and without any apology for lateness, as if breakfast could be kept about all the morning to suit his con-

venience, sat down and began to eat. Jonathan Coppin got up, sighed and went away to his brewery. The Professor looked at the last comer with a meditative air, as if he would like to make him disappear, and could do it too, but was uncertain how Harry would take it. Mrs. Bormalack hurried away on domestic business. Mr. Maliphant laughed and rubbed his hands together, and then laughed again as if he were thinking of something really comic, and said, 'Yes, I knew the Sergeant very well, a well set-up man he was, and Caroline Coppin was a pretty girl.' At this point his face clouded and his eyes expressed doubt. 'There was,' he added, 'something I wanted to ask you, young man, something'—here he tapped his forehead—'something about your father or your mother, or both; but I have forgotten—never mind. Another time—another time.'

He ran away with boyish activity and a schoolboy's laugh, being arrived at that time of life when one becomes light of heart once more, knowing by experience that nothing matters very much. There were none left in the room but the couple who enjoyed the title.

His lordship sat in his arm-chair, apparently enjoying it, in meditation and repose; this, one perceives, is quite the best way of enjoying an hereditary title, if you come to it late in life.

His wife had, meanwhile, got out a little shabby portfolio in black leather, and was turning over the papers with impatience; now and then she looked up to see whether this late young man had finished his breakfast. She fidgeted, arranged, and worried with her papers, so that anyone, whose skull was not six inches thick, might have seen that she wanted to be alone with her husband. It was also quite clear to those who thought about things, and watched this little lady, that there may be meaning in certain proverbial expressions touching grey mares.

Presently Harry Goslett finished his coffee, and, paying no attention to her little ladyship's signals of distress, began to open up conversation on general subjects with the noble lord.

She could bear it no longer. Here were the precious moments wasted and thrown away, every one of which should be bringing them nearer to the recognition of their rights.

'Young man,' she cried, jumping up in her chair; 'if you've got nothing to do but to loll and lop around, all forenoon, I guess we hev, and this is the room in which we do our work.'

'I beg your pardon, Lady Davenant——'

'Young man—Git——'

She pointed to the door.

CHAPTER II.

A VERY COMPLETE CASE.

His lordship, left alone with his wife, manifested certain signs of uneasiness. She laid the portfolio on the table, turned over the papers, sorted some of them, picked out some for reference, fetched the ink, and placed the penholder in position.

'Now, my dear,' she said, 'no time to lose. Let us set to work in earnest.'

His lordship sighed. He was sitting with his fat hands upon his knees, contented with the repose of the moment.

'Clara Martha,' he grumbled, 'cannot I have one hour of rest?'

'Not one, till you get your rights.' She hovered over him like a little falcon, fierce and persistent. 'Not one. What? You a British peer? You, who ought to be sitting with a

coronet on your head—you to shrink from the trouble of writing out your Case? And such a Case!'

He only moaned. Certainly he was a very lethargic person.

'You are not the Carpenter, your father. Nor even the Wheelwright, your grandfather, who came down of his own accord. You would rise, you would soar—you have the spirit of your ancestors.'

He feebly flapped with his elbows, as if he really would like to take a turn in the air, but made no verbal response.

'Cousin Nathaniel,' she went on, 'gave us six months at six dollars a week. That's none too generous of Nathaniel, seeing we have no children, and he will be the heir to the title. I guess Aurelia Tucker set him against the thing. Six months, and three of them gone already, and nothing done. What would Aurelia say if we went home again, beaten?'

The little woman gasped, and would have shrugged her shoulders, but they were such a long way down—shoulders so sloping could not be shrugged.

Her remonstrances moved the heavy man, who drew his chair to the table with great deliberation.

'We are here,' she continued—always the exhorter and the strengthener of faith—'not to claim a title but to assume it. We shall present our Case to Parliament, or the Queen, or the House of Lords, or the Court of Chancery, or whosoever is the right person, and we shall say, "I am Lord Davenant." That is all.'

'Clara Martha,' said her husband, 'I wish that were all we had to do. And, on the whole, I would as soon be back in Canaan City, New Hampshire, and the trouble over. The memoranda are all here,' he said. 'Can't we get someone else to draw up the Case?'

'Certainly not. You must do it. Why, you used to think nothing of writing out a Fourth of July speech.'

He shook his head.

'And you know that you have often said, yourself, that there wasn't a book written that could teach you anything up to Quadratic Equations. And self-raised, too!'

'It isn't that, Clara Martha. It isn't that.

Listen!' he sank his voice to a whisper. '*It's the doubt.* That's the point. Every time I face that doubt it's like a bucket of cold water down my back.'

She shivered. Yes: there was always the doubt.

'Come, my dear,' she said presently; 'we must get the Case drawn up, so that anyone may read it. That is the first thing—never think of any doubt.'

He took up one of the loose papers, which was covered with writing.

'Timothy Clitheroe Davenant,' he read with a weary sigh, 'died at Canaan City, New Hampshire, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and ninety-four. By trade he was a Wheelwright. His marriage is recorded in the church register of July 1, 1773. His headstone still stands in the old churchyard, and says that he was born in England in the year one thousand seven hundred and thirty-two—it does not say where he was born—and that he was sixty-two years of age at the day of his death. Also, that long time he bore——'

'Yes, yes, but you needn't put that in. Go on with your Case. The next point is your own father. Courage, my dear; it is a very strong Case.'

'The Case *is* very strong.' His lordship plucked up courage, and took up another paper. 'This is my father's record. All is clear: Born in Canaan City on October 10, 1774, the year of Independence, the eldest son of the aforesaid Timothy Clitheroe Davenant, Wheelwright, and Dinah his wife—here is a copy of the register. Married on May 13, 1810, which was late in life, because he didn't somehow get on so fast as some, to Susanna Pegley, of the same parish. Described as a Carpenter—but a poor workman, Clara Martha, and fond of chopping yarns, in which he was equalled by none. He died in the year 1830, his tombstone still standing, like his father's before him. It says that his end was peace. Wal—he always wanted it. Give him peace, with a chair in the verandah, and a penknife and a little bit of pine, and he asked for no more. Only that, and his wife wouldn't let him have it. His end was peace.'

'You all want peace,' said his wife. 'The Davenants always did think that they only had to sit still and the plums would drop in their mouths. As for you, I believe you'd be content to sit and sit in Canaan City till Queen Victoria found you out and sent you the coronet herself. But you've got a wife as well as your father.'

'I hev,' he said, with another sigh. 'Perhaps we were wrong to come over—I think I was happier in the schoolroom, when the boys were gone hum. It was very quiet, there, for a sleep in the afternoon by the stove. And in summer the trees looked harnsome in the sunlight.'

She shook her head impatiently.

'Come,' she cried. 'Where are the "Recollections" of your grandfather?'

He found another paper, and read it slowly,

'My grandfather died before I was born. My father, however, said that he used to throw out hints about his illustrious family, and that if he chose to go back to England some people would be very much surprised. But he never explained himself. Also he would sometimes

speak of a great English estate, and once he said that the freedom of a Wheelwright was better than the gilded chains of a British aristocrat—that was at a Fourth of July Meetin'.'

'Men talk wild at meetins',' said his wife. 'Still, there may have been a meanin' behind it. Go on Timothy— I mean, my lord.'

'As for my father, it pleased him, when he could put up his feet and crack with his friends, to brag of his great connections in England. But he never knew rightly who they were, and he was too peaceful and restful a creature to take steps to find out.'

'Waitin' for King George,' observed his wife. 'Just what you would be doin', but for me.'

'That's all the "Recollections."' Here comes my own declaration:

'"I, Timothy Clitheroe Davenant, make affidavit on oath, if necessary—but I am not quite clear as to the righteousness of swearing—that I am the son of the late Timothy Clitheroe Davenant, sometime carpenter of the City of Canaan, New Hampshire, U.S.A., and Susanna his wife, both now deceased; that I was born

in the year of grace one thousand eight hundred and fifteen, and that I have been for forty years a teacher in my native town." That is all clean and above-board, Clara Martha; no weak point so far, father to son, marriage certificates regularly found, and baptism registers. No one can ask more. "Further, I, the above-named Timothy, do claim to be the lawful and legitimate heir to the ancient barony of Davenant, supposed to be extinct in the year 1783 by the death of the last lord, without male issue." Legally worded, I think,' he added with a little proud smile.

'Yes: it reads right. Now for the connection.'

'Oh! the connection.' His lordship's face clouded over. His consort, however, awaited the explanation, for the thousandth time, in confidence. Where the masculine mind found doubt and uncertainty, the quick woman's intellect, ready to believe and tenacious of faith, had jumped to certainty.

'The connection is this.' He took up another paper, and read:

'"The last Lord Davenant had one son

only, a boy named Timothy Clitheroe. All the eldest sons of the House were named Timothy Clitheroe, just as all the Ashleys are named Anthony. When the boy arrived at years of maturity he was sent on the Grand Tour, which he made with a tutor. On returning to England, it is believed that he had some difference with his father, the nature of which has never been ascertained. He then embarked upon a ship sailing for the American Colonies. Nothing more was ever heard about him, no news came to his father or his friends, and he was supposed to be dead."'

'Even the ship was never heard of,' added her ladyship, as if this was a fact which would greatly help in lengthening the life of the young man.

'That, too, was never heard of again. If she had not been thrown away, we might have learned what became of the Honourable Timothy Clitheroe Davenant.' There was some confusion of ideas here, which the ex-schoolmaster was not slow to perceive.

'I mean,' he tried to explain, 'that if she got safe to Boston, the young man would have

landed there, and all would be comparatively clear. Whereas, if she was cast away, we must now suppose that he was saved and got ashore somehow.'

'Like Saint Paul,' she cried triumphantly, 'on a piece of wreck—what St. Paul did, he could do, I should hope.'

'Because,' her husband continued, 'there is one fact which proves that he *did* get ashore, that he concluded to stay there, that he descended so far into the social scale as to become a wheelwright; and that he lived and died in the town of Canaan, New Hampshire.'

'Go on, my dear. Make it clear. Put it strong. This is the most interesting point of all'

'And this young man, who was supposed to be cast away in the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty-four, aged twenty-two, was exactly the same age as my grandfather, Timothy Clitheroe Davenant, who *bore the same name*, which is proved by the headstone and the church books.'

'Could there,' asked his wife, springing to

her feet, 'could there have been two Englishmen——?'

'Of the same illustrious and historic surname, both in America?' replied her husband, roused into a flabby enthusiasm.

'Of the same beautiful Christian name?—two Timothys?'

'Born both in the same year?'

The little woman with the bright eyes and the sloping shoulders threw her arms about her husband's neck.

'You *shall* have your rights, my dear,' she said; 'I will live to see you sitting in the House of Lords with the hereditary statesmen of England. If there is justice in the land of England, you shall have your rights. There is justice, I am sure, and equal law for poor and rich, and encouragements for the virtuous. Yes, my dear, the virtuous. Whatever your faults may be, your virtues are many, and it can't but do the House of Lords good to see a little virtue among them. Not that I hold with Aurelia Tucker that the English House of Lords are wallowers in sin; whereas, Irene Pascoe once met a Knight on a missionary plat-

form and found he'd got religion. But virtue you can never have too much of. Courage, my lord; forget the Carpenter, and think only of the Nobleman, your grandfather, who condescended to become a Wheelwright.'

He obediently took up the pen and began. When he seemed fairly absorbed in the task of copying out and stating the Case, she left him. As soon as the door was closed, he heaved a gentle sigh, pushed back his chair, put up his feet upon another chair, covered his head with his red silk pocket-handkerchief—for there were flies in the room—and dropped into a gentle slumber. The Carpenter was, for the moment, above the condescending Wheelwright.

CHAPTER III.

ONLY A DRESSMAKER.

Harry Goslett returned to the boarding-house that evening, in a mood of profound dejection; he had spent a few hours with certain cousins, whose acquaintance he was endeavouring to make. 'Hitherto,' he said, writing to Lord Jocelyn, 'the soil seems hardly worth cultivating.' In this he spoke hastily, because every man's mind is worth cultivating as soon as you find out the things best fitted to grow in it. But some minds will only grow turnips, while others produce the finest strawberries.

The cousins, for their part, did not, as yet, take to the new arrival, whom they found difficult to understand—his speech was strange, his manner stranger: these peculiarities, they thought in their ignorance, were due to residence in the United States, where Harry had

found it expedient to place most of his previous years. Conversation was difficult between two rather jealous workmen and a brother artisan, who greatly resembled the typical Swell—an object of profound dislike and suspicion to the working classes.

He had now spent some three weeks among his kinsfolk. He brought with him some curiosity, but little enthusiasm. At first he was interested and amused; rapidly he became bored and disgusted; for as yet he saw only the outside of things. There was an uncle, Mr. Benjamin Bunker, the study of whom, regarded as anybody else's uncle, would have been pleasant. Considered as his own connection by marriage—Benjamin and the late Serjeant Goslett having married sisters—he was too much inclined to be ashamed of him. The two cousins seemed to him—as yet he knew them very little—a pair of sulky, ill-bred young men, who had taken two opposite lines, neither of which was good for social intercourse. The people of the boarding-house continued to amuse him, partly because they were in a way afraid of him. As for the place—he looked

about him, standing at the north entrance of Stepney Green—on the left hand, the Whitechapel Road; behind him, Stepney, Limehouse, St. George's-in-the-East, Poplar, and Shadwell; on the right, the Mile End Road, leading to Bow and Stratford; before him, Ford, Hackney, Bethnal Green. Mile upon mile of streets with houses—small, mean, and monotonous houses; the people living the same mean and monotonous lives, all after the same model. In his ignorance he pitied and despised those people, not knowing how rich and full any life may be made, whatever the surroundings, and even without the gracious influences of Art. Under the influence of this pity and contempt, when he returned in the evening at half-past nine, he felt himself for the first time in his life run very low down indeed.

The aspect of the room was not calculated to cheer him up. It was lit with a mean two-jet gas burner; the dingy curtain wanted looping up, the furniture looked more common and mean than usual. Yet, as he stood in the doorway, he became conscious of a change.

The boarders were all sitting there, just as

usual, and the supper cloth was removed; Mr. Maliphant had his long pipe fixed in the corner of his mouth, but he held it there with an appearance of constraint, and he had let it go out. Mr. Josephus Coppin sat in the corner in which he always put himself, so as to be out of everybody's way; also with a pipe in his hand, unlighted. Daniel Fagg had his Hebrew Bible spread out before him, and his Dictionary, and his copy of the Authorised Version—which he used, as he would carefully explain, not for what schoolboys call a crib, but for purpose of comparison. This was very grand! A man who can read Hebrew at all inspires one with confidence; but the fact is the more important when it is connected with a discovery; and to compare Versions—one's own with the collected wisdom of a Royal Commission—is a very grand thing indeed. But to-night he sat with his head in his hands, and his sandy hair pushed back, looking straight before him; and Mrs. Bormalack was graced in her best black silk dress, and 'the decanters' were proudly placed upon the table with rum, gin, and brandy in them, and beside them stood the tumblers, hot

water, cold water, lemons, and spoons, in the most genteel way. The representative of the Upper House, who did not take spirits and water, sat calmly dignified in his arm-chair by the fireplace, and in front of him, on the other side, sat his wife, with black thread mittens drawn tightly over her little hands and thin arms, bolt upright, and conscious of her rank. All appeared to be silent, but that was their custom, and all, which was not their custom, wore an unaccustomed air of company manners which was very beautiful to see.

Harry, looking about him, perplexed at these phenomena, presently observed that the eyes of all, except those of Daniel Fagg, were fixed in one direction ; and that the reason why Mr. Maliphant held an unlighted pipe in his mouth, and Josephus one in his hand, and that Daniel was not reading, and that his lordship looked so full of dignity, and that ardent spirits were abroad, was nothing less than the presence of a young lady.

In such a house, and, in fact, all round Stepney Green, the word 'lady' is generally used in a broad and catholic spirit ; but in this

case Harry unconsciously used it in the narrow, prejudiced, one-sided sense peculiar to Western longitudes. And it was so surprising to think of a young lady in connection with Bormalack's, that he gasped and caught his breath. And then Mrs. Bormalack presented him to the new arrival in her best manner. 'Our youngest!' she said, as if he had been a son of the house—'our youngest and last—the sprightly Mr. Goslett. This is Miss Kennedy, and I hope—I'm sure—that you two will get to be friendly with one another, not to speak of keeping company, which is early days yet for prophecies.'

Harry bowed in his most superior style. What on earth, he thought again, did a young lady want at Stepney Green?

She had the carriage and the manner of a lady; she was quite simply dressed in a black Cashmere; she wore a red ribbon round her white throat, and had white cuffs. A lady—unmistakably a lady; also young and beautiful, with great brown eyes, which met his own frankly, and with a certain look of surprise which seemed an answer to his own.

'Our handsome young cabinet-maker, Miss Kennedy,' went on the landlady—Harry wondered whether it was worse to be described as sprightly than as handsome, and which adjective was likely to produce the more unfavourable impression on a young lady—'is wishful to establish himself in a genteel way of business, like yourself.'

'When I was in the dressmaking line,' observed her ladyship, 'I stayed at home with mother and Aunt Keziah. It was not thought right in Canaan City for young women to go about setting up shops by themselves. Not that I say you are wrong, Miss Kennedy, but London ways are not New Hampshire ways.'

Miss Kennedy murmured something softly, and looked again at the handsome cabinet-maker, who was still blushing with indignation and shame at Mrs. Bormalack's adjectives, and ready to blush again on recovery to think that he was so absurd as to feel any shame about so trifling a matter. Still, every young man likes to appear in a good light in the presence of beauty.

The young lady, then, was only a dress-

maker. For the moment she dropped a little in his esteem, which comes of our artificial and conventional education; because—Why not a dressmaker? Then she rose again, because —WHAT a dressmaker! Could there be many such in Stepney? If so, how was it that poets, novelists, painters, and idle young men did not flock to so richly endowed a district? In this unexpected manner does nature offer compensations. Harry also observed with satisfaction the novel presence of a newly arrived piano, which could belong to no other than the newcomer; and finding that the conversation showed no signs of brightening, he ventured to ask Miss Kennedy if she would play to them.

Now, when she began to play, a certain magic of the music fell upon them all, affecting everyone differently. Such is the power of music, and thus diverse is it in its operation. As for his lordship, he sat nodding his head and twinkling his eyes and smiling sweetly, because he was in imagination sitting among his Peers in the Upper House with a crown of gold and a robe of fur, and all his friends of

Canaan City, brought across the Atlantic at his own expense for this very purpose, were watching him with envy and admiration from the gallery. Among them was Aurelia Tucker, the scoffer and thrower of cold water. And her ladyship sat beating time with head and hand, thinking how the family estates would probably be restored, with the title, by the Queen. She had great ideas on the Royal Prerogative, and had indeed been accustomed to think in the old days that Englishmen go about in continual terror lest her Majesty, in the exercise of this Prerogative, should order their heads to be removed. This gracious vision, due entirely to the music, showed her in a stately garden entertaining Aurelia Tucker and other friends whom she, like her husband, had imported from Canaan City for the purpose of exhibiting the new greatness. And Aurelia was green with envy, though she wore her best black silk dress.

The other boarders were differently affected. The melancholy Josephus leant his head upon his hand, and saw himself in imagination the Head Brewer, as he might have been, but for

the misfortune of his early youth. Head Brewer to the Firm of Messenger, Marsden, and Company! What a position!

Daniel Fagg, for his part, was dreaming of the day when his Discovery was to be received by all and adequately rewarded. He anticipated the congratulations of his friends in Australia, and stood on deck in port surrounded by the crowd, who shook his hand and cheered him, in good Australian fashion, as Daniel the Great, Daniel the Scourge of Scholars, Daniel the Prophet—a second Daniel. The Professor took advantage of this general rapture or abstraction from earthly things to lay the plans for a *grand coup* in legerdemain, a new experiment, which should astonish everybody. This he afterwards carried through with success.

Mrs. Bormalack, for her part, filled and slowly drank a large tumbler of hot brandy and water. When she had finished it she wiped away a tear. Probably, stimulated by the brandy, which is a sentimental spirit, she was thinking of her late husband, Collector for the Brewery, who was himself romantically fond of brandy and water, and came to an

early end in consequence of over-rating his powers of consumption.

Mr. Maliphant winked his eyes, rolled his head, rubbed his hands, and laughed joyously, but in silence. Why, one knows not. When the music finished, he whispered to Daniel Fagg. 'No,' he said, 'this is the third time in the year that you have asked leave to bury your mother. Make it your grandmother, young man.' Then he laughed again, and said that he had been with Walker in Nicaragua. Harry heard this communication, and the attempt to fill up the story from these two fragments afterwards gave him nightmare.

Miss Kennedy played a gavotte, and then another, and then a sonata. Perhaps it is the character of this kind of music to call up pleasant and joyous thoughts; certainly there is much music, loved greatly by some people, which makes us sad, notably the strains sung at places of popular resort. They probably become favourites because they sadden so much. Who would not shed tears on hearing 'Tommy Dodd?'

She played without music, gracefully, easily,

and with expression. While she played Harry sat beside the piano, still wondering on the same theme. She, a Stepney dressmaker! Who, in this region, could have taught her that touch? She 'wishful to establish herself in a genteel way of business'? Was art, then, permeating downwards so rapidly? Were the people just above the masses, the second or third stratum of the social pyramid, taught music, and in such a style? Then he left off wondering, and fell to the blissful contemplation of a beautiful woman playing beautiful music. This is an occupation always delightful to young Englishmen, and it does equal credit to their heads and to their hearts that they never tire of so harmless an amusement. When she finished playing, everybody descended to earth, so to speak.

The noble pair remembered that their work was still before them—all to do: one of them thought, with a pang, about the drawing of the Case, and wished he had not gone to sleep in the morning.

The clerk in the Brewery awoke to the recollection of his thirty shillings a week, and

reflected that the weather was such as to necessitate a pair of boots which had soles.

The learned Daniel Fagg bethought him once more of his poverty and the increasing difficulty of getting subscribers, and the undisguised contempt with which the head of the Egyptian Department had that morning received him.

Mr. Maliphant left off laughing, and shook his puckered old face with a little astonishment that he had been so moved.

Said the Professor, breaking the silence:

'I like the music to go on, so long as no patter is wanted. They listen to music if it's lively, and it prevents 'em from loooking round and getting suspicious. You haven't got an egg upon you, Mrs. Bormalack, have you? Dear me, one in your lap! Actually in a lady's lap! A common egg, one of our "selected," at tenpence the dozen. Ah! In your lap, too! How very injudicious! You might have dropped it, and broken it. Perhaps, Miss, you wouldn't mind obliging once more with "Tommy, make room for your uncle" or "Over the garden wall," if you please.'

Miss Kennedy did not know either of these airs, but she laughed and said she would play something lively, while the Professor went on with his trick. First, he drew all eyes to meet his own like a fascinating constrictor, and then he began to 'palm' the egg in the most surprising manner. After many adventures it was ultimately found in Daniel Fagg's coat pocket. Then the Professor smiled, bowed, and spread out his hands as if to show the purity and honesty of his conjuring.

'You play very well,' said Harry, to Miss Kennedy, when the conjuring was over and the Professor had returned to his chair and his nightly occupation with a pencil, a piece of paper, and a book.

'Can you play?'

'I fiddle a little. If you will allow me, we will try some evening a duet together.'

'I did not know——' she began, but checked herself. 'I did not expect to find a violinist here.'

'A good many people of my class play,' said Harry, mendaciously, because the English workman is the least musical of men.

'Few of mine,' she returned, rising, and closing the piano, 'have the chance of learning. But I have had opportunities.'

She looked at her watch, and remarked that it was nearly ten o'clock, and that she was going to bed.

'I have spoken to Mr. Bunker about what you want, Miss Kennedy,' said the landlady. 'He will be here to-morrow morning about ten on his rounds.'

'Who is Mr. Bunker?' asked Angela.

They all seemed surprised. Had she never, in whatever part of the world she had lived, heard of Mr. Bunker—Bunker the Great?

'He used to be a sort of a factotum to old Mr. Messenger,' said Mrs. Bormalack. 'His death was a sad blow to Mr. Bunker. He's a general agent by trade, and he deals in coal, and he's a house agent, and he knows everybody round Stepney and up the Mile End Road as far as Bow. He's saved money, too, Miss Kennedy, and is greatly respected.'

'He ought to be,' said Harry; 'not only because he was so much with Mr. Messenger, whose name is revered for the kindred associa-

tions of beer and property, but also because he is my uncle—he ought to be respected.'

'Your uncle?'

'My own—so near, and yet so dear—my uncle Bunker. To be connected with Messenger, Marsden, and Company, even indirectly, through such an uncle, is in itself a distinction. You will learn to know him, and you will learn to esteem him, Miss Kennedy. You will esteem him all the more if you are interested in beer.'

Miss Kennedy blushed.

'Bunker is great in the Company. I believe he used to consider himself a kind of partner while the old man lived. He knows all about the big Brewery. As for that, everybody does round Stepney Green.'

'The Company,' said Josephus gloomily, 'is nothing but a chit of a girl.' He sighed, thinking how much went to her, and how little came to himself.

'We are steeped in beer,' Harry went on. 'Our conversation turns for ever on beer; we live for beer; the houses round us are filled with the Company's servants; we live *by* beer.

For example, Mrs. Bormalack's late husband——'

'He was a Collector for the Company,' said the landlady, with natural pride.

'You see, Miss Kennedy, what a responsible and exalted position was held by Mr. Bormalack.' (The widow thought that sometimes it was hard to know whether this sprightly young man was laughing at people or not, but it certainly was a very high position, and most respectable.) 'He went round the Houses,' Harry went on. 'Houses, here, mean public-houses; the Company owns half the public-houses in the East End. Then here is my cousin, the genial Josephus. Hold up your head, Josephus. He, for his part, is a clerk in the House.'

Josephus groaned. 'A junior clerk,' he murmured.

'The Professor is not allowed in the Brewery. He might conjure among the vats, and vats have never been able to take a practical joke; but he amuses the Brewery people. As for Mr. Maliphant, he carves figure-heads for the ships which carry away the Brewery

beer; and perhaps when the Brewery wants cabinets made they will come to me.'

'It is the biggest Brewery in all England,' said the landlady. 'I can never remember———because my memory is like a sieve—how much beer they brew every year; but somebody once made a calculation about it, compared with Niagara Falls, which even Mr. Bunker said was surprising.'

'Think Miss Kennedy,' said Harry, 'of an Entire Niagara of Messenger's Entire.'

'But how can this Mr. Bunker be of use to me?' asked the young lady.

'Why!' said Mrs. Bormalack. 'There is not a shop nor a street nor any kind of place within miles Mr. Bunker doesn't know, who they are that live there, how they make their living, what the rent is, and everything. That's what made him so useful to old Mr. Messenger.'

Miss Kennedy, for some reason, changed colour. Then she said that she thought she would like to see Mr. Bunker.

When she was gone Harry sat down beside

his lordship and proceeded to smoke tobacco in silence, refusing the proffered decanters.

Said the Professor, softly:

'She'd be a fortune—a gem of the first water—upon the boards. As pianoforte player between the feats of magic, marvel, and mystery, or a medium under the magnetic influence of the operator, or a clairvoyante, or a thought-reader—or——' Here he relapsed into silence with a sigh.

'She looks intelligent,' said Daniel Fagg. 'When she hears about my Discovery she will——' Here he caught the eye of Harry Goslett, who was shaking a finger of warning, which he rightly interpreted to mean that dressmakers must not be asked to subscribe to learned works. This abashed him.

'Considered as a figurehead,' began Mr. Maliphant, 'I remember——'

'As a dressmaker, now—' interrupted Harry. 'Do Stepney dressmakers often play the piano like——well, like Miss Kennedy? Do they wear gold watches? Do they talk and move and act so much like real ladies, that no

one could tell the difference? Answer me that, Mrs. Bormalack.'

'Well, Mr. Goslett, all I can say is, that she seems a very proper young lady to have in the house.'

'Proper, ma'am? If you were to search the whole of Stepney, I don't believe you could find such another. What does your ladyship say?'

'I say, Mr. Goslett, that in Canaan City the ladies who are dressmakers set the fashions to the ladies who are not; I was myself a dressmaker. And Aurelia Tucker, though she turns up her nose at our elevation, is, I must say, a lady who would do credit to any circle, even yours, Mrs. Bormalack. And such remarks about real ladies and dressmakers I do not understand, and I expected better manners, I must say. Look at his lordship's manners, Mr. Goslett, and his father was a carpenter, like you.'

CHAPTER IV.

UNCLE BUNKER.

'My uncle!'

It was the sprightly young cabinet-maker who sprang to his feet, and grasped the hand of the new-comer with an effusion not returned.

'Allow me, Miss Kennedy, to present to you my uncle, my uncle Bunker, whose praise you heard us sing with one consent last night. We did, indeed, revered one! Whatever you want brought, Miss Kennedy, from a piano to a learned pig, this is the man who will do it for you. A percentage on the cost, with a trifling charge for time, is all he seeks in return. He is generally known as the Benevolent Bunker; he is everybody's friend; especially he is beloved by persons behindhand with their rents, he is——'

Here Mr. Bunker drew out his watch, and

observed with severity that his time was valuable, and that he came about business.

Angela observed that the sallies of his nephew were received with disfavour.

'Can we not,' pursued Harry, regardless of the cloud upon his uncle's brow—'can we not escape from affairs of urgency for one moment? Show us your lighter side, my uncle. Let Miss Kennedy admire the gifts and graces which you hide, as well as the sterner qualities which you exhibit.'

'Business, young lady,' the agent repeated, with a snort and a scowl. He took off his hat and rubbed his bald head with a silk pocket-handkerchief until it shone like polished marble. He was short in stature and of round figure. His face was red and puffy, as if he was fond of hot brandy-and-water, and he panted, being a little short of breath. His eyes were small and close together, which gave him a cunning look: his whiskers were large and grey; his lips were thick and firm, and his upper lip was long: his nose was broad, but not humorous; his head was set on firmly, and he had a square chin. Evidently he was a man of determina-

tion, and he was probably determined to look after his own interests first.

'I want,' said Angela, 'to establish myself in this neighbourhood as a dressmaker.'

'Very good,' said Mr. Bunker. 'That's practical. It is my business to do with practical people, not sniggerers and idle gigglers.' He looked at his nephew.

'I shall want a convenient house, and a staff of workwomen, and—and someone acquainted with business details and management.'

'Go on,' said Mr. Bunker. 'A forewoman you will want, of course.'

'Then, as I do not ask you to give me your advice for nothing, how are you generally paid for such services?'

'I charge,' he said, 'as arranged for beforehand. Time for talking, arranging, and house-hunting, half-a-crown an hour. That won't break you. And you won't talk took much, knowing you have to pay for it. Percentage on the rent, ten per cent. for the first year, nothing afterwards; if you want furniture, I will furnish your house from top to bottom on



"*"Very good. That's practical."*"

the same terms, and find you work-girls at five shillings a head.'

'Yes,' said Angela. 'I suppose I must engage a staff. And I suppose—' here she looked at Harry, as if for advice. 'I suppose that you *are* the best person to go to for assistance.'

'There is no one else,' said Mr. Bunker. 'That is why my terms are so low.'

His nephew whistled softly.

Mr. Bunker, after an angry growl at people who keep their hands in their pockets, proceeded to develop his views. Miss Kennedy listened languidly, appearing to care very little about details, and agreeing to most expensive things in a perfectly reckless manner. She was afraid, for her part, that her own ignorance would be exposed if she talked. The agent, however, quickly perceived how ignorant she was, from this very silence, and resolved to make the best of so promising a subject. She could not possibly have much money—who ever heard of a Stepney dressmaker with any?—and she evidently had no experience. He would get as much of the money as he could, and she would

be the gainer in experience! A most equitable arrangement, he thought, being one of those—too few, alas!—who keep before their eyes a lofty ideal, and love to act up to it.

When he had quite finished and fairly embarked his victim on a vast ocean of expenditure, comparatively, and with reference to Stepney and Mile End customs, he put up his pocket-book and remarked, with a smile, that he should want references of respectability.

'That's usual,' he said: 'I could not work without.'

Angela changed colour. To be asked for references was awkward.

'You can refer to me, my uncle,' said Harry.

Mr. Bunker took no notice of this proposition.

'You see, Miss,' he said, 'we don't know you, nor where you come from, nor what money you've got, nor how you got it. No doubt it is all right, and I'm sure you look honest. Perhaps you've got nothing to hide, and very likely there's good reasons for wanting to settle here.'

'My grandfather was a Whitechapel man by birth,' she replied. 'He left me some money. If you must have references, of course I could refer you to the lawyers who managed my little affairs. But I would rather, to save trouble, pay for everything on the spot, and the rent in advance.'

Mr. Bunker consented to waive his objection on payment of a sum of ten pounds down, it being understood and concluded that everything bought should be paid for on the spot, and a year's rent when the house was fixed upon, paid in advance; in consideration for which he said the young lady might, in subsequent transactions with strangers, refer to himself, a privilege which was nothing less than the certain passport to fortune.

'As for me,' he added, 'my motto is, "Think first of your client." Don't spare yourself for him; toil for him, think for him, rise up early and lie down late for him, and you reap your reward from grateful hearts. Lord! the fortunes I have made!'

'Virtuous Uncle Bunker!' cried Harry with enthusiasm. 'Noble, indeed!'

The good man for the moment forgot the existence of his frivolous nephew, who had retired up the stage, so to speak. He opened his mouth as if to say something in anger, but refrained, and snorted.

'Now that we have settled that matter, Mr. Bunker,' the girl said without noticing the interruption, 'let us talk about other matters.'

'Are they business matters?'

'Not exactly; but still——'

'Time is money; an hour is half-a-crown.' He drew out his watch, and made a note of the time in his pocket-book. 'A quarter to eleven, Miss. If I didn't charge for time, what would become of my clients? Neglected; their interests ruined; the favourable moment gone. If I could tell you of a lady I established two years ago in one of the Brewery Houses, and what she's made of it, and what she says of me, you would be astonished. A grateful heart! and no better brandy-and-water, hot, with a slice of lemon, in the Whitechapel Road. But you were about to say, Miss——'

'She was going to begin with a hymn of praise, Uncle Bunker; paid in advance, like

the rest. Gratitude for favours to come. But if you like to tell about the lady, do. Miss Kennedy will only charge you half-a-crown an hour. I'll mark time.'

'I think, young man,' said Mr. Bunker, 'that it is time you should go to your work. Stepney is not the place for sniggerin' peacocks; they'd better have stayed in the United States.'

'I am waiting till you have found me a place, too,' the young man replied. 'I too would wish to experience the grateful heart. It is peculiar to Whitechapel.'

'I was going to say,' Angela went on, 'that I hear you were connected with old Mr. Messenger for many years.'

'I was,' Mr. Bunker replied, and straightened his back with pride. 'I was—everybody knows that I was his confidential factotum and his familiar friend, as David was unto Jonathan.'

'Indeed! I used to—to—hear about him, formerly, a great deal.'

'Which made his final behaviour the more revolting,' Mr. Bunker continued, completing his sentence.

'Really! How did he finally behave?'

'It was always—ah! for twenty years, between us, "Bunker, my friend," or "Bunker, my trusted friend," tell me this, go there, find out that. I bought his houses; I let his houses; I told him who were responsible tenants; I warned him when shooting of moons seemed likely; I found out their antecedents and told him their stories. He had hundreds of houses, and he knew everybody that lived in them, and what their fathers were and their mothers were, and even their grandmothers. For he was a Whitechapel man by birth, and was proud of it.'

'But—the shameful behaviour!'

'All the time'—he shook his head and looked positively terrible in his wrath—'all the time I was piling up his property for him, houses here, streets there, he would encourage me in his way. "Go on, Bunker," he would say, "go on. A man who works for duty, like yourself, and to please his employers, and not out of consideration for the pay, is one of a million;" as I certainly was, Miss Kennedy. "One of a million," he said; "and you will

have your reward after I am gone." Over and over again he said this, and of course I reckoned on it, and only wondered how much it would tot up to. Something. I thought. in four figures; it couldn't be less than four figures.' Here he stopped and rubbed his bald head again.

Angela caught the eyes of his nephew, who in his seat behind was silently laughing. He had caught the situation which she herself now readily comprehended. She pictured to herself this blatant Professor of Disinterestedness and Zeal buzzing and fluttering about her grandfather, and the quiet old man egging him on to more protestations.

'Four figures, for certain, it would be. Once I asked his advice as to how I should invest that reward when it did come. He laughed, Miss. Yes, for once he laughed, which I never saw him do before or after. I often think he must be sorry now to think of that time he laughed. Yah! I'm glad of it.'

So far as Angela could make it, his joy grew out of a persuasion that this particular fit of laughter was somehow interfering with her

grandfather's present comforts, but perhaps she was wrong.

'He laughed,' continued Mr. Bunker, 'and he said that house property, in a rising neighbourhood, and if it could be properly looked after, was the best investment for money. House property, he said, as far as the money would go.'

'And when he died?' asked the listener, with another glance at Harry, the unsympathetic, whose face expressed the keenest enjoyment.

'Nothing, if you please; not one brass farthing. Hunks! Hunks!' He grew perfectly purple, and clutched his fist as if he would fain be punching of heads. 'Not one word of me in his will. All for the girl: millions—millions—for her; and for me who done his work—nothing.'

'You have the glow of virtue,' said his nephew.

'It seems hard,' said Angela quickly, for the man looked dangerous, and seemed capable of transferring his wrath to his nephew; 'it seems hard to get nothing, if anything was promised.'

'It seems a pity,' Harry chimed in, 'that so much protesting was in vain. Perhaps Mr. Messenger took him at his word. What a dreadful thing to be believed!'

'A Hunks,' replied Mr. Bunker; 'a miserly Hunks.'

'Let me write a letter for you,' said Harry, 'to the heiress; we might forward it with a deputation of grateful hearts from Stepney.'

'Mind your own business,' growled his uncle. 'Well, Miss, you wanted to hear about Mr. Messenger, and you have heard. What next?'

'I should very much like, if it were possible,' Angela replied, 'to see this Great Brewery, of which one hears so much. Could you, for instance, take me over, Mr. Bunker?'

'At a percentage,' whispered his nephew, loud enough for both to hear.

'Messenger's Brewery,' he replied, 'is as familiar to me as my own fireside. I've grown up beside it. I know all the people in it. They all know me. Perhaps they respect me. For it was well known that a handsome legacy was promised, and expected. And nothing, after all. As for taking you over, of course I

can. We will go at once. It will take time: and time is money.'

'May I go, too?' asked Harry.

'No, sir; you may not. It shall not be said in the Mile End Road that an industrious man like myself, a Worker for Clients, was seen in working time with an Idler.'

The walk from Stepney Green to Messenger and Marsden's Brewery is not far. You turn to the left if your house is on one side, and to the right if it is on the other; then you pass a little way down one street, and a little way, turning again to the left, up another—a direction which will guide you quite clearly. You then find yourself before a great gateway, the portals of which are closed; beside it is a smaller door, at which, in a little lodge, sits one who guards the entrance.

Mr. Bunker nodded to the porter, and entered unchallenged. He led the way across a court to a sort of outer office.

'Here,' he said, 'is the book for the visitors' names. We have them from all countries: great lords and ladies; foreign princes; and all the brewers from Germany and America, who

come to get a wrinkle. Write your own name in it, too. Something, let me tell you, to have your name in such noble company.'

She took a pen and wrote hurriedly.

Mr. Bunker looked over her shoulder.

'Ho! ho!' he said, 'that is a good one! See what you've written.'

In fact, she had written her own name—Angela Marsden Messenger.

She blushed violently.

'How stupid of me! I was thinking of the heiress—they said it was her name.'

She carefully effaced the name, and wrote under it, 'A. M. Kennedy.'

'That's better. And now come along. A good joke, too! Fancy their astonishment if they had come to read it!'

'Does she often come—the heiress?'

'Never once been anigh the place; never seen it; never asks after it; never makes an inquiry about it. Draws the money and despises it.'

'I wonder she has not got more curiosity.'

'Ah! It's a shame for such a Property to come to a girl—a girl of twenty-one. Thirteen

acres it covers—think of that! Seven hundred people it employs, most of them married. Why, if it was only to see her own vats, you'd think she'd get off of her luxurious pillows for once, and come here.'

They entered a great Hall remarkable, at first, for a curious smell, not offensive, but strong and rather pungent. In it stood half-a-dozen enormous vats, closed by wooden slides, like shutters, fitting tightly. A man standing by opened one of these, and presently Angela was able to make out, through the volumes of steam, something bright going round, and a brown mess going with it.

'That is hops. Hops for the biggest Brewery, the richest, in all England. And all belonging to a girl who, likely enough, doesn't drink more than a pint and a half a day.'

'I dare say not,' said Angela; 'it must be a dreadful thing indeed to have so much beer, and to be able to drink so little.'

He led the way upstairs into another great Hall, where there was the grinding of machinery and another smell, sweet and heavy.

'This is where we crush the malt,' said

Mr. Bunker—'see!' He stooped, and picked out of a great box a handful of the newly crushed malt. 'I suppose you thought it was roasted. Roasting, young lady,' he added with severity, 'is for Stout, not for Ale!'

Then he took her to another place, and showed her where the liquor stood to ferment; how it was cooled, how it was passed from one vat to another, how it was stored and kept in vats, dwelling perpetually on the magnitude of the business, and the irony of fortune in conferring this great gift upon a girl.

'I know now,' she interrupted, 'what the place smells like. It is fusel oil.' They were standing on a floor of open iron bars, above a row of long covered vats, within which the liquor was working and fermenting. Every now and then there would be a heaving of the surface, and a quantity of malt would then move suddenly over.

'We are famous,' said Mr. Bunker; 'I say *we*, having been the confidential friend and adviser of the late Mr. Messenger, deceased; we are famous for our Stout; also for our Mild; and we are now reviving our Bitter, which we

had partially neglected. We use the Artesian Well, which is four hundred feet deep, for our Stout, but the Company's water for our Ales; and our water rate is two thousand pounds a year. The Artesian Well gives the ale a grey colour, which people don't like. Come into this room, now'—it was another great Hall covered with sacks. 'Hops again, Miss Kennedy; now, that little lot is worth ten thousand pounds—ten—thousand—think of that; and it is all spoiled by the rain, and has to be thrown away. We think nothing of losing ten thousand pounds here, nothing at all!'—he snapped his fingers—'it is a mere trifle to the girl who sits at home and takes the profits!'

He spoke as if he felt a personal animosity to the girl. Angela told him so.

'No wonder,' he said; 'she took all the legacy that ought to have been mine: no man can forgive that. You are young, Miss Kennedy, and are only beginning business; mark my words, one of these days you will feel how hard it is to put a little by—work as hard as you may—while here is this one having it put by for her, thousands a day, and doing nothing for it—nothing at all.'

Then they went into more great Halls, and up more stairs, and on to the roof, and saw more piles of sacks, more malt, and more hops. When they smelt the hops, it seemed as if their throats were tightened; when they smelt the fermentation, it seemed as if they were smelling fusel oil; when they smelt the plain crushed malt, it seemed as if they were getting swiftly, but sleepily, drunk. Everywhere and always the steam rolled backwards and forwards, and the grinding of the machinery went on, and the roaring of the furnaces; and the men went about to and fro at their work. They did not seem hard worked, nor were they pressed; their movements were leisurely, as if beer was not a thing to hurry; they were all rather pale of cheek, but fat and jolly, as if the beer was good and agreed with them. Some wore brown paper caps, for it was a pretty draughty place; some went bare-headed, some wore the little round hat in fashion. And they went to another part, where men were rolling barrels about, as if they had been skittles, and here they saw vats holding three thousand barrels; and one thought of giant armies—say

two hundred and fifty thousand thirsty Germans —beginning the Loot of London with one of these royal vats. And they went through stables, where hundreds of horses were stalled at night, each as big as an elephant, and much more useful.

In one great room, where there was the biggest vat of all, a man brought them beer to taste; it was Messenger's Stout. Angela took her glass and put it to her lips with a strange emotion—she felt as if she should like a quiet place to sit down in and cry. The great place was hers—all hers—and this was the Beer with which her mighty fortune had been made.

'Is it,' she asked, looking at the heavy foam of the frothing stout; 'is this Messenger's Entire?'

Bunker sat down and drank off his glass before replying. Then he laid his hands upon his stick and made answer, slowly, remembering that he was engaged at half-a-crown an hour, which is one halfpenny a minute.

'This is not Entire,' he said. 'You see, Miss Kennedy, there's fashions in beer, same as

in clothes; once it was all Cooper, now you never hear of Cooper. Then it was all Half-an-arf—you never hear of anyone ordering Half-an-arf now. Then it was Stout. Nothing would go down but Stout, which I recommend myself, and find it nourishing. Next, Bitter came in, and honest Stout was despised; now, we're all for Mild. As for Entire, why—bless my soul!—Entire went out before I was born. Why, it was Entire which made the fortune of the first Messenger that was—a poor little brewery he had, more than a hundred years ago, in this very place, because it was cheap for rent. In those days they used to brew Strong Ale, Old and Strong: Stout, same as now; and Twopenny, which was small beer. And because the Old Ale was too strong, and the Stout too dear, and the Twopenny too weak, the people used to mix them all three together, and they called them "Three Threads;" and you may fancy the trouble it was for the pot-boys to go to one cask after another, all day long, because they had no beer engines then. Well, what did Mr. Messenger do? He brewed a beer as strong as the Three Threads, and he called it

Messenger's Entire Three Threads, meaning that here you had 'em all in one, and that's what made his fortune; and now, young lady, you've seen all I've got to show you, and we will go.'

'I make bold, young woman,' he said, as they went away, 'to give you a warning about my nephew. He's a good-looking chap, for all he's worthless, though it's a touch-and-go style that's not my idea of good looks. Still, no doubt some would think him handsome. Well, I warn you.'

'That is very good of you, Mr. Bunker. Why do you warn me?'

'Why, anybody can see already that he's taken with your good looks. Don't encourage him. Don't keep company with him. He's been away a good many years—in America—and I fear he's been in bad company.'

'I am sorry to hear that.'

'You saw his sniggerin', sneerin' way with me, his uncle. That doesn't look the right sort of man to take up with, I think. And as for work, he seems not to want any. Says he can afford to wait a bit. Talks about opening a

cabinet-makin' shop. Well, he will have none of my money. I tell him that beforehand. A young jackanapes! A painted peacock! I believe, Miss Kennedy, that he drinks. Don't have nothing to say to him. As for what he did in the States, and why he left the country, I don't know: and if I were you, I wouldn't ask.'

With this warning he left her, and Angela went home trying to realise her own great possessions. Hundreds of houses; rows of streets; this enormous brewery, working day after day for her profit and advantage: and these invested moneys, these rows of figures which represented her personal property. All hers! All her own! All the property of a girl! Surely, she thought, this was a heavy burden to be laid upon one frail back.

CHAPTER V.

THE CARES OF WEALTH.

It is, perhaps, a survival of feudal customs that in English minds a kind of proprietorship is assumed over one's dependents, those who labour for a man and are paid by him. It was this feeling of responsibility which had entered into the mind of Angela, and was now firmly fixed there. All these men, this army of seven hundred brewers, drivers, clerks, accountants, and the rest, seemed to belong to her. Not only did she pay them the wages and salaries which gave them their daily bread, but they lived in her own houses among the streets which lie to the right and to the left of the Mile End Road. The very chapels where they worshipped, being mostly of some Nonconformist sect, stood on her own ground—everything was hers.

The richest heiress in England! She repeated this to herself over and over again, in order to accustom herself to the responsibilities of her position, not to the pride of it. If she dwelt too long upon the subject, her brain reeled. What was she to do with all her money? A man—like her grandfather—often feels joy in the mere amassing of wealth; to see it grow is enough pleasure; other men in their old age sigh over bygone years, which seem to have failed in labour or effort. Then men sigh over by-gone days in which more might have been saved. But girls cannot be expected to reach these heights. Angela only weakly thought what an immense sum of money she had, and asked herself what she could do, and how she should spend her wealth to the best advantage.

The most pitiable circumstance attending the possession of wealth is that no one sympathises with the possessor. Yet his or her sufferings are sometimes very great. They begin at school where a boy or a girl, who is going to be very rich, feels already set apart. He loses the greatest spur to action. It is when

they grow up, however, that the real trouble begins. For a girl with large possessions is always suspicious lest a man should pretend to love her for the sake of her money; she has to suspect all kinds of people who want her to give, lend, advance, or promise them money; she is the mere butt of every society, hospital, and institution; her table is crowded every morning with letters from decayed gentlewomen and necessitous clergymen and recommenders of 'cases;' she longs to do good in her generation, but does not know how; she is expected to buy quantities of things which she does not want, and to pay exorbitant prices for everything; she has to be a patron of Art: she is invited to supply every woman throughout the country who wants a mangle, with that useful article; she is told that it is her duty to build new churches over the length and breadth of the land; she is earnestly urged to endow new Colonial bishopries over all the surface of the habitable globe. Then she has to live in a great house and have troops of idle servants. And, whether she likes it or not, she has to go a great deal into society.

All this, without the least sympathy or pity from those who ought to feel for her, who are in the happy position of having no money. Nobody pities an heiress; to express pity would seem like an exaggerated affectation of virtue, the merest pedantry of superiority; it would not be believed. Therefore, while all the world is agreed in envying her, she is bemoaning her sad fate. Fortunately, she is rare.

As yet, Angela was only just at the commencement of her troubles. The girls at Newnham had not spoiled her by flattery or envy; some of them even pitied her sad burden of money; she had as yet only realised part of the terrible isolation of wealth; she had not grown jealous, or suspicious, or arrogant, as in advancing years often happens with the very rich; she had not yet learned to regard the whole world as composed entirely of money-grabbers. All she had felt hitherto was that she went in constant danger from interested wooers, and that youth, combined with money-bags, is an irresistible attraction to men of all ages. Now, however, for the first time she understood the magnitude of her possessions,

and felt the real weight of her responsibilities. She saw, for the first time, the hundreds of men working for her; she saw the houses whose tenants paid rent to her; she visited her great Brewery; and she asked herself the question, which Dives no doubt frequently asked—What she had done to be specially set apart and selected from humanity as an exception to the rule of labour? Even Bunker's complaint about the difficulty of putting by a little, and his indignation because she herself could put by so much, seemed pathetic.

She walked about the sad and monotonous streets of East London, reflecting upon these subjects. She did not know where she was, nor the name of any street; in a general way she knew that most of the street probably belonged to herself, and that it was an inexpressibly dreary street. When she was tired she asked her way back again. No one insulted her; no one troubled her; no one turned aside to look at her. When she went home, she sat, silent for the most part, in the common sitting room. The boarding-house was inexpressibly stupid except when the sprightly young me-

chanic was present, and she was even angry with herself for finding his society pleasant. What could there be, she asked, in common between herself and this workman? Then she wondered, remembering that so far she had found nothing in her own mind that was not also in his. Could it be that two years of Newnham had elevated her mentally no higher than the level of a cabinet-maker?

Her meditation brought her, in the course of a few days, to the point of action. She would do something. She therefore wrote a letter instructing her solicitors to get her, immediately, two reports, carefully drawn up.

First, she would have a report on the Brewery, its average profits for the last ten years, with a list of all the *employés*, the number of years' service, the pay they received, and, as regards the juniors, the characters they bore.

Next, she wanted a report on her property at the East End, with a list of her tenants, their occupations and trades, and a map showing the position of her houses.

When she had got these reports she would

be, she felt, in a position to work upon them.

Meantime, Mr. Bunker not having yet succeeded in finding a house suitable for her dress-making business, she had nothing to do but to go on walking about and to make herself acquainted with the place. Once or twice she was joined by the Idle Apprentice, who, to do him justice, was always ready to devote his unprofitable time to these excursions, which his sprightliness enlivened.

There is a good deal to see in and about Stepney, though it can hardly be called a beautiful suburb. Formerly it was a very big place, so big that, though Bethnal Green was once chopped off at one end and Limehouse at the other, not to speak of Shadwell, Wapping, Stratford, and other great cantles, there still remains a parish as big as St. Pancras. Yet, though it is big, it is not proud. Great men have not been born there or lived there: there are no associations. Stepney Green has not even got its Polly, like Paddington Green and Wapping Old Stairs; the streets are all mean, and the people for the most part stand

upon that level where respectability—beautiful quality!—begins.

'Do you know the West End?' Angela asked her companion when they were gazing together upon an unlovely avenue of small houses which formed a street. She was thinking how monotonous must be the daily life in these dreary streets.

'Yes, I know the West End. What is it you regret in your comparison?'

Angela hesitated.

'There are no carriages here,' said the workman: 'no footmen in powder or coachmen in wigs; there are no ladies on horseback, no great squares with big houses, no clubs, no opera-house, no picture-galleries. All the rest of life is here.'

'But these things make life,' said the heiress. 'Without society and art, what is life?'

'Perhaps these people find other pleasures; perhaps the monotony gets relieved by hope, and anxiety, and love, and death, and such things.' The young man forgot how the weight of this monotony had fallen upon his own brain: he remembered, now, that his com-

panion would probably have to face this dreariness all her life, and he tried in a kindly spirit to divert her mind from the thought of it. 'You forget that each life is individual, and has its own separate interests; and these are apart from the conditions which surround it. Do you know my cousin, Tom Coppin?'

'No; what is he?'

'He is a printer by trade. Of late years he has been engaged in setting up atheistic publications. Of course, this occupation has had the effect of making him an earnest Christian. Now he is a Captain of the Salvation Army.'

'But I thought——'

'Don't think, Miss Kennedy; look about and see for yourself. He lives on five-and-twenty shillings a week, in one room, in just such a street as this. I laughed at him at first; now I laugh no longer. You can't laugh at a man who spends his whole life preaching and singing hymns among the Whitechapel roughs, taking as part of the day's work all the rotten eggs, brickbats, and kicks that come in his way. Do you think his life would be less monotonous if he lived in Belgrave Square?'

'But all are not preachers and captains in the Salvation Army.'

'No; there is my cousin Dick. We are, very properly, Tom, Dick, and Harry. Dick is, like myself, a cabinet-maker. He is also a politician, and you may hear him at his Club denouncing the House of Lords, and the Church, and Monarchical Institutions, and hereditary everything, till you wonder the people do not rise and tear all down. They don't, you see, because they are quite accustomed to big talk, and it never means anything, and they are not really touched by the dreadful wickedness of the Peers.

'I should like to know your cousins.'

'You shall. They don't like me, because I have been brought up in a somewhat different school. But that does not greatly matter.'

'Will they like me?' It was a very innocent question, put in perfect innocence, and yet the young man blushed.

'Everybody,' he said, 'is bound to like you.'

She changed colour and became silent, for a while.

He went on presently:

'We are all as happy as we deserve to be, I suppose. If these people knew what to do in order to make themselves happier, they would go and do that thing. Meantime, there is always love for everybody, and success, and presently the end—is not life everywhere monotonous?'

'No,' she replied stoutly; 'mine is not.'

He was thinking at the moment that of all lives a dressmaker's must be one of the most monotonous. She remembered that she was a dressmaker, and explained.

'There are the changes of fashion, you see.'

'Yes, but you are young,' he replied, from his vantage-ground of twenty-three years, being two years her superior. 'Mine is monotonous when I come to think of it. Only, you see, one does not think of it oftener than one can help. Besides, as far as I have got, I like the monotony.'

'Do you like work?'

'Not much, I own. Do you?'

'No.'

'Yet you are going to settle down at Stepney.'

'And you, too?'

'As for me, I don't know.' The young man coloured slightly. 'I may go away again, soon, and find work elsewhere.'

'I was walking yesterday,' she went on, 'in the great, great churchyard of Stepney Church. Do you know it?'

'Yes—that is, I have not been inside the walls. I am not fond of churchyards.'

'There they lie—acres of graves. Thousands upon thousands of dead people, and not one of the whole host remembered. All have lived, worked, hoped much, got a little, I suppose, and died. And the world none the better.'

'Nay, that you cannot tell.'

'Not one of all remembered,' she repeated. 'There is an epitaph in the churchyard which might do for everyone:—

> Here lies the body of Daniel Saul,
> Spitalfields weaver; and that is all.

That is all.'

'What more did the fellow deserve?' asked her companion. 'No doubt he was a very good

weaver. Why, he has got a great posthumous reputation. You have quoted him.'

He did not quite follow her line of thought. She was thinking in some vague way of the waste of material.

'They had very little power of raising the world, to be sure. They were quite poor, ill-educated, and without resource.'

'It seems to me,' replied her companion, 'that nobody has any power of raising the world. Look at the preachers and the writers and the teachers. By their united efforts they contrive to shore up the world and keep it from falling lower. Every now and then down we go, flop—a foot or two of civilisation lost. Then we lose a hundred years or so until we can get shoved up again.'

'Should not rich men try to shove up, as you call it?'

'Some of them do try, I believe,' he replied; 'I don't know how they succeed.'

'Suppose, for instance, this young lady, this Miss Messenger, who owns all this property, were to use it for the benefit of the people, how would she begin, do you suppose?'

'Most likely she would bestow a quantity of money to a hospital, which would pauperise the doctors, or she would give away quantities of blankets, bread, and beef in the winter, which would pauperise the people.'

Angela sighed.

'That is not very encouraging.'

'What you could do, by yourself, if you pleased, among the working girls of the place, would be, I suppose, worth ten times what she could do with all her giving. I'm not much in the Charity line myself, Miss Kennedy, but I should say, from three weeks' observation of the place and conversation with the respectable Bunker, that Miss Messenger's money is best kept out of the parish, which gets on very well without it.'

'Her money! Yes, I see. Yet she herself——' She paused.

'We working men and women——'

'You are not a working man, Mr. Goslett.' She faced him with her steady, honest eyes, as if she would read the truth in his. 'Whatever else you are, you are not a working man.'

He replied without the least change of colour—

'Indeed, I am the son of Serjeant Goslett of the —th Regiment, who fell in the Indian Mutiny. I am the nephew of good old Benjamin Bunker, the virtuous and the disinterested. I was educated in rather a better way than most of my class, that is all.'

'Is it true that you have lived in America?'

'Quite true.' He did not say how long he had lived there.

Angela, with her own guilty secret, was suspicious that perhaps this young man might also have his.

'Men of your class,' she said, 'do not as a rule talk like you.'

'Matter of education—that is all.'

'And you are really a cabinet-maker?'

'If you will look into my room and see my lathe, I will show you specimens of my work, O thou unbeliever! Did you think that I might have "done something," and so be fain to hide my head?'

It was a cruel thing to suspect him in this way, yet the thought had crossed her mind

that he might be a fugitive from the law and society, protected for some reason by Bunker.

Harry returned to the subject of the place.

'What we want here,' he said, 'as it seems to me, is a little more of the pleasures and graces of life. To begin with, we are not poor and in misery, but for the most part fairly well off. We have great works here—half-a-dozen Breweries, though none so big as Messenger's; chemical works, sugar refineries, though these are a little depressed at present, I believe; here are all the docks; then we have silk-weavers, rope-makers, sail-makers, match-makers, cigar-makers; we build ships; we tackle jute, though what jute is, and what we do with it, I know not; we cut corks; we make soap, and we make fireworks; we build boats. When all our works are in full blast, we make quantities of money. See us on Sundays, we are not a bad-looking lot; healthy, well-dressed, and tolerably rosy. But we have no pleasures.'

'There must be some.'

'A theatre and a music-hall in Whitechapel Road. That has to serve for two millions of

people. Now, if this young heiress wanted to do any good, she should build a Palace of Pleasure here.'

'A Palace of Pleasure!' she repeated. 'It sounds well. Should it be a kind of Crystal Palace?'

'Well!' It was quite a new idea, but he replied as if he had been considering the subject for years. 'Not quite—with modifications.'

'Let us talk over your Palace of Pleasure,' she said, 'at another time. It sounds well. What else should she do?'

'That is such a gigantic thing, that it seems enough for one person to attempt. However, we can find something else for her—why, take schools. There is not a public school for the whole two millions of East London. Not one place in which boys—to say nothing of girls—can be brought up in generous ideas. She must establish at least half-a-dozen public schools for boys and as many for girls.'

'That is a very good idea. Will you write and tell her so?'

'Then there are libraries, reading-rooms,

clubs, but all these would form part of the Palace of Pleasure.'

'Of course. I would rather call it a Palace of Delight. Pleasure seems to touch a lower note. We should have music-rooms for concerts as well.'

'And a school for music.' The young man became animated as the scheme unfolded itself.

'And a school for dancing.'

'Miss Kennedy,' he said with enthusiasm, 'you *ought* to have the spending of all this money! And—why, you would hardly believe it—but there is not in the whole of this parish of Stepney a single dance given in the year. Think of that! But perhaps——' he stopped again.

'You mean that dressmakers do not, as a rule, dance? However, I do, and so there must be a school for dancing. There must be a great college to teach all these accomplishments.'

'Happy Stepney!' cried the young man, carried out of himself. 'Thrice happy Stepney! Glorified Whitechapel! Beatified Bow! What things await ye in the fortunate future!'

He left her at the door of Bormalack's, and went off on some voyage of discovery of his own.

The girl retreated to her own room. She had now hired a sitting-room all to herself, and paid three months in advance, and sat down to think. Then she took paper and pen and began to write.

She was writing down, while it was hot in her head, the threefold scheme which this remarkable young workman had put into her head.

'We women are weak creatures,' she said with a sigh. 'We long to be up and doing, but we cannot carve out our work for ourselves. A man must be with us to suggest or direct it. The College of Art—yes, we will call it the College of Art; the Palace of Delight; the public schools. I should think that between the three a good deal of money might be got through. And oh! to think of converting this dismal suburb into a home for refined and cultivated people!'

In blissful reverie she saw already the mean houses turned into red brick Queen Anne

terraces and villas; the dingy streets were planted with avenues of trees; art flourished in the house as well as out of it; life was rendered gracious sweet, and lovely.

And to think that this result was due to the suggestion of a common working man!

But then, he had lived in the States. Doubtless in the States all the working men——. But was that possible?

CHAPTER VI.

A FIRST STEP.

With this great programme before her, the responsibilities of wealth were no longer so oppressive. When power can be used for beneficent purposes, who would not be powerful? And beside the mighty shadow of this scheme, the smaller project for which Bunker was finding a house looked small indeed. Yet, was it not small, but great, and destined continually to grow greater?

Bunker came to see her from day to day, reporting progress. He heard of a house here or a house there, and went to see it. But it was too large; and of another, but it was too small; and of a third, but it was not convenient for her purpose; and so on. Each house took up a whole day in examination,

and Bunker's bill was getting on with great freedom.

The delay, however, gave Angela time to work out her new ideas on paper. She invoked the assistance of her friend, the cabinet-maker, with ideas; and, under the guise of amusing themselves, they drew up a long and business-like prospectus of the proposed new institutions.

First, there were the High Schools, of which she would found six—three for boys and three for girls. The great feature of these schools was to be that they should give a liberal education for a very small fee, and that in their playgrounds, their discipline, and, as far as possible, their hours, they were to resemble the great public schools.

'They must be endowed for the masters' and mistresses' salaries, and with scholarships; and—and—I think the boys and girls ought to have dinner in the school, so as not to go home all day; and—and—there will be many things to provide for each school.'

She looked as earnest over this amusement, Harry said, as if she were herself in possession of the fortune which they were thus administer-

ing. They agreed that when the schools were built, an endowment of 70,000*l.* each, which would yield 2,000*l.* a year, ought to be enough, with the school fees, to provide for the education of five hundred in each school. Then they proceeded with the splendid plan of the new College. It was agreed that learning, properly so called, should be entirely kept out of the programme. No Political Economy, said the Newnham student, should be taught there. Nor any of the usual things—Latin, Greek, mathematics, and so forth—said the young man from the United States. What, then, remained?

Everything. The difficulty in making such a selection of studies is to know what to omit.

'We are to have,' said Harry, now almost as enthusiastic as Angela herself, 'a thing never before attempted. We are to have a College of Art. What a grand idea! It was yours, Miss Kennedy.'

'No,' she replied, 'it was yours. If it comes to anything, we shall always remember that it was yours.'

An amiable contest was finished by their recollecting that it was only a play, and they

laughed and went on, half ashamed, and yet both full of enthusiasm.

'The College of Art!' he repeated; 'why, there are a hundred kinds of art; let us include accomplishments.'

They would; they did.

They finally resolved that there should be professors, lecturers, or teachers, with convenient class rooms, theatres and lecture halls in the following accomplishments and graces:—Dancing, but there must be the old as well as the new kinds of dancing. The waltz was not to exclude the minuet, the reel, the country dance, or the old square dances; the pupils would also have such dances as the *bolero*, the *tarantella*, and other national jumperies. Singing, which was to be a great feature, as anybody could sing, said Angela, if they were taught. 'Except my Uncle Bunker!' said Harry. Then there were to be musical instruments of all kinds. Skating, bicycling, lawn tennis, racquets, fives, and all kinds of games; rowing, billiards, archery, rifle shooting. Then there was to be acting, with reading and recitation; there were to be classes on gardening, on

cookery, and on the laws of beauty in costume. 'The East End shall be independent of the rest of the world in fashion,' said Angela; 'we will dress according to the rules of Art!' 'You shall,' cried Harry, 'and your own girls shall be the new dressmakers to the whole of glorified Stepney.' Then there were to be lectures, not in literature, but in letter-writing, especially love-letter writing, versifying, novel-writing, and essay-writing; that is to say, on the more delightful forms of literature—so that poets and novelists should arise, and the East End, hitherto a barren desert, should blossom with flowers. Then there was to be a Professor of Grace, because a graceful carriage of the body is so generally neglected; and Harry, who had a slim figure and long legs, began to indicate how the Professor would probably carry himself. Next there were to be Professors of Painting, Drawing, Sculpture and Design; and lectures on Furniture, Colour, and Architecture. The arts of photography, china painting, and so forth were to be cultivated; and there were to be classes for the encouragement of leather work, crewel work, fret-work, brass-work, wood and ivory carving, and so forth.

'There shall be no house in the East End,' cried the girl, 'that shall not have its panels painted by one member of the family; its woodwork carved by another, its furniture designed by a third, its windows planted with flowers by another.'

Her eyes glowed, her lips trembled.

'You *ought* to have had the millions,' said Harry.

'Nay, you, for you devised it all!' she replied. She was so glowing, so rosy red, so soft and sweet to look upon; her eyes were so full of possible love—though of love she was not thinking—that almost the young man fell upon his knees to worship this Venus.

'And all these beautiful things,' she went on, breathless, 'are only designed for the sake of the Palace of Delight.'

'It shall stand somewhere near the central place, this Stepney Green, so that all the East can get to it.

'It shall have many halls,' she went on. 'One of them shall be for concerts, and there shall be an organ: one of them shall be for a theatre, and there will be a stage and every-

thing: one shall be a dancing hall, one a skating rink, one a hall for lectures, readings and recitations: one a picture gallery, one a permanent exhibition of our small Arts. We will have our concerts performed from our School of Music: our plays shall be played by our amateurs taught at our School of Acting; our exhibitions shall be supplied by our own people; the things will be sold, and they will soon be sold off and replaced, because they will be cheap. Oh! oh! oh!' She clasped her hands, and fell back in her chair, overpowered with the thought.

'It will cost much money,' said Harry, weakly, as if money was any object—in dreams.

'The College must be endowed with 30,000*l.* a year, which is a million of money,' Angela replied, making a little calculation. 'That money must be found. As for the Palace, it will require nothing but the building, and a small annual income to pay for repairs and servants. It will be governed by a Board of Directors, elected by the people themselves, to whom the Palace will belong. And no one shall pay or be paid for any performance. And

the only condition of admission will be good behaviour, with exclusion as a penalty.'

The thing which she contemplated was a deed the like of which makes to tingle the ears of those who hear it. To few, indeed, is it given to communicate to a whole nation this strange and not unpleasant sensation.

One need not disguise the fact that the possession of this power, and the knowledge of her own benevolent intentions, gave Angela a better opinion of herself than she had ever known before. Herein, my friends, lies, if you will rightly regard it, the true reason of the feminine love for power illustrated by Chaucer. For the few who have from time to time wielded authority have ever been persuaded that they wielded it wisely, benevolently, religiously, and have of course congratulated themselves on the possession of so much virtue. What mischiefs, thought Elizabeth of England, Catharine of Russia, Semiramis of Babylon, and Angela of Whitechapel, might have followed had a less wise and virtuous person been on the throne!

It was not unnatural, considering how much

she was with Harry at this time, and how long were their talks with each other, that she should have him a great deal in her mind. For these ideas were certainly his, not hers. Newnham, she reflected humbly, had not taught her to originate. She knew that he was but a cabinet-maker by trade. Yet, when she involuntarily compared him, his talk, his manners, his bearing, with the men whom she had met, the young Dons and the undergraduates of Cambridge, the clever young fellows in society who were reported to write for the 'Saturday,' and the Berties and Algies of daily life, she owned to herself that in no single point did this cabinet-maker fellow compare unfavourably with any of them. He seemed as well taught as the last made Fellow of Trinity who came to lecture on Literature and Poetry at Newnham; as cultivated as the mediæval Fellow who took Philosophy and Psychology, and was supposed to entertain ideas on religion so original as to amount to a Fifth Gospel: as quick as the most thorough-going Society man who has access to studios, literary circles, musical people and æsthetes; and as careless as any

Bertie or Algie of the whole set. This it was which made her blush, because, if he had been a common man, a mere Bunker, he might, with his knowledge of his class, have proved so useful a servant to her, so admirable a vizier. Now, unfortunately, she felt that she could only make him useful in this way after she had confided in him; and that to confide in him might raise dangerous thoughts in the young man's head. No; she must not confide in him.

It shows what a thoughtful young person Angela was that she would blush all by herself only to think of this danger to Harry Goslett.

She passed all that night and the whole of the next day and night in a dream over the Palace of Delight and the College for educating people in sweet and pleasant things—the College of Art.

On the next morning a cold chill fell upon her, caused I know not how; not by the weather, which was the bright and hot weather of last July; not by any ailment of her own, because Angela owned the most perfect mechanism ever constructed by Nature; nor by

any unpleasantness in the House, because, now that she had her own room, she generally breakfasted alone; nor by anything in the daily papers—which frequently, by their evil telegrams and terrifying forebodings, do poison the spring and fountain-head of the day; nor by any letter, because the only one she had was from Constance Woodcote at Newnham, and it told the welcome news that she was appointed Mathematical Lecturer with so much a head for fees, and imploring Angela to remember her promise that she would endow Newnham with a scholarship. Endow Newnham! Why, she was going to have a brand-new college of her own, to say nothing of the High Schools for boys and girls. Perhaps the cause of her depression was the appearance of Bunker, who came to tell her that he had at last found the house which would suit her. No other house in the neighbourhood was in any way to compare with it; the house stood close by, at the south-west corner of Stepney Green. It was ready for occupation, the situation was as desirable as that of Tirzah the Beautiful; the rent was extremely low, considering the

many advantages: all the nobility and gentry of the place, he declared, would flock round a dressmaker situated in Stepney Green itself; there were rooms for show-rooms, with plenty of other rooms and everything which would be required; finally, as if this were an additional recommendation, the house *belonged to himself.*

'I am ready,' he said with a winning smile, 'to make a sacrifice of my own interests in order to oblige a young lady, and I will take a lower rent from you than I would from anybody else.'

She went with him to 'view' the house. One looks at a picture, a horse, an estate, a book, but one 'views' a house. Subtle and beautiful distinction, which shows the poetry latent in the heart of every house agent! It was Bunker's own. Surely that was not the reason why it was let at double the rent of the next house, which belonged to Angela herself, nor why the tenant had to undertake all the repairs, paper, and painting, external and internal, nor why the rent began from that very day, instead of the half-quarter or the next quarter-day. Bunker himself assured Miss Ken-

nedy that he had searched the whole neighbourhood for a suitable place, but could find none so good as his own house. As for the houses of the Messenger property, they were liable, he said, to the demands of a lawyer's firm, which had no mercy on a tenant, while as for himself, he was full of compassion, and always ready to listen to reason. He wanted no other recommendation than a year's rent paid in advance, and would undertake to execute, at the tenant's cost, the whole of the painting, papering, whitewashing, roofing, pipes, chimneys, and general work himself; 'whereas, young lady,' he added, 'if you had taken one of those Messenger houses, you cannot tell in what hands you would have found yourself, nor what charges you would have had to pay.'

He shook his fat head, and rattled his keys in his pocket. So strong is the tendency of the human mind to believe what is said, in spite of all experience to the contrary, that his victim smiled and thanked him, knowing very well that the next minute she would be angry with herself for so easily becoming a dupe to a clumsy rogue.

She thanked him for his consideration, she said, yet she was uneasily conscious that he was overreaching her in some way, and she hesitated.

'On the Green,' he said. 'What a position! Looking out on the garden! With such rooms! And so cheap!'

'I don't know,' she replied, 'I must consult some one.'

'As to that,' he said, 'there may be another tenant; I can't keep offers open. Take it, Miss, or leave it. There!'

While she still hesitated, he added one more recommendation.

'An old house it is, but solid, and will stand for ever. Why, old Mr. Messenger was born here.'

'Was he?' she cried, 'was my—was Mr. Messenger actually born here?'

She hesitated no longer. She took the house at his own price; she accepted his terms, extortionate and grasping as they were.

When the bargain was completed—when she had promised to sign the agreement for a twelvemonth, pay a year in advance, and

appoint the disinterested one her executor of repairs, she returned to Bormalack's. In the doorway, a cigarette in his mouth, lounged the Idle Apprentice.

'I saw you,' he said, 'with the benevolent Bunker. You have fallen a prey to my uncle?'

'I have taken a house from him.'

'The two phrases are convertible. Those who take his houses are his victims. I hope no great mischief is done.'

'Not much, I think.'

The young man threw away his cigarette.

'Seriously, Miss Kennedy,' he said, 'my good uncle will possess himself of all the money he can get out of you. Have a care.'

'He can do me no harm, thank you all the same. I wanted a house soon, and he has found me one. What does it matter if I pay a little more than I ought?'

'What does it matter?' Harry was not versed in details of trade, but he knew enough to feel that this kind of talk was unpractical. 'What does it matter? My dear young lady, if you go into business, you must look after the sixpences.'

Miss Kennedy looked embarrassed. She had betrayed herself, she thought. 'I know—I know. But he talked me over.'

'I *have* heard,' said the practical man, looking profoundly wise, 'that he who would save money must even consider that there is a difference between a guinea and a sovereign; and that he shouldn't pay a cabman more than twice his fare, and that it is wrong to pay half-a-guinea for Heidsieck Monopole when he can get Pommery and Greno at seven-and-sixpence.'

Then he, too, paused abruptly, because he felt as if he had betrayed himself. What have cabinet-makers to do with Pommery and Greno? Fortunately, Angela did not hear the latter part of the speech. She was reflecting on the ease with which a crafty man—say Bunker—may compass his ends with the simple—say herself.

'I do not pretend,' he said, 'to know all the ropes, but I should not have allowed you to be taken in quite so readily by this good uncle. Do you know—' his eyes, when they were serious, which was not often, were really good. Angela perceived they were serious now—'Do you know that the name of the Uncle who was

indirectly, so to speak, connected with the Robin Redbreasts, was originally Bunker? He changed it after the children were dead, and he came into the property.'

'I wish you had been with me,' she said simply. 'But I suppose I must take my chance as other girls do.'

'Most other girls have got men to advise them. Have you no one?'

'I might have'—she was thinking of her lawyers—who were paid to advise her if required. 'But I will find out things for myself.'

'And at what a price! Are your pockets lined with gold, Miss Kennedy?' They certainly were, but he did not know it.

'I will try to be careful. Thank you.'

'As regards going with you, I am always at your command. I will be your servant, if you will accept me as such.'

This was going a step farther than seemed altogether safe. Angela was hardly prepared to receive a cabinet-maker, however polite and refined he might seem, as a lover.

'I believe,' she said, 'that in our class of

life it is customary for young people to "keep company," is it not?'

'It is not uncommon,' he replied, with much earnestness. 'The custom has even been imitated by the higher classes.'

'What I mean is this, that I am not going to keep company with any one; but, if you please to help me, if I ask your advice, I shall be grateful.'

'Your gratitude,' he said with a smile, 'ought to make any man happy!'

'Your compliments,' she retorted, 'will certainly kill my gratitude; and now, Mr. Goslett, don't you really think that you should try to do some work? Is it right to lounge away the days among the streets? Are *your* pockets, I may ask, lined with gold?'

'I am looking for work. I am hunting everywhere for work. My uncle is going to find me a workshop. Then I shall request the patronage of the nobility and gentry of Stepney, Whitechapel, and the Mile End Road. H. G. respectfully solicits a trial.' He laughed as if there could be no doubt at all about the future, and as if a few years of looking around were of

no importance. Then he bowed to Angela in the character of the Complete Cabinet-maker. 'Orders, madam, orders executed with neatness and despatch. The highest price given for second-hand furniture.'

She had got her house, however, though she was going to pay far too much for it. That was a great thing, and, as the more important schemes could not be all commenced at a moment's notice, she would begin with the lesser —her dressmaker's shop.

Here Mr. Goslett could not help her. She applied, therefore, again to Mr. Bunker, who had a Registry office for situations wanted. 'My terms,' he said, 'are five shillings on application and five shillings for each person engaged.'

He did not say that he took half-a-crown from each person who wanted a place and five shillings on her getting the place. His ways were ways of pleasantness, and on principle he never spoke of things which might cause unpleasant remarks. Besides, no one knew the trouble he had to take in suiting people.

'I knew,' he said, 'that you would come back to me. People will only find out my worth when I am gone.'

'I hope you will be worth a great deal, Mr. Bunker,' said Angela.

'Pretty well, young lady. Pretty well. Ah! my nephews will be the gainers. But not what I might have been if it had not been for the meanness, the—the—Hunxiness of that wicked old man.'

'Do you think you can find me what I want, Mr. Bunker?'

'*Can* I?' He turned over the leaves of a great book. 'Look at this long list; all ready to better themselves. Apprentices anxious to get through their articles, and improvers to be dressmakers, and dressmakers to be forewomen, and forewomen to be mistresses. That is the way of the world, young lady. Sweet contentment, where art thou?' The pastoral simplicity of his words and attitude were inexpressibly comic.

'And how are you going to begin, Miss Kennedy?'

'Quietly, at first.'

'Then you'll want a matter of one or two dressmakers, and half-a-dozen improvers. The apprentices will come later.'

'What are the general wages in this part of London?'

'The dressmakers get sixteen shillings a week; the improvers six. They bring their own dinners, and you give them their tea. But, of course, you know all that.'

'Of course,' said Angela, making a note of the fact, notwithstanding.

'As for one of your dressmakers, I can recommend you Rebekah Hermitage, daughter of the Rev. Percival Hermitage. She cannot get a situation, because of her father's religious opinions.'

'That seems strange. What are they?'

'Why, he's Minister of the Seventh Day Independents. They've got a chapel in Redman's Row; they have their services on Saturday because, they say—and it seems true—that the Fourth Commandment has never been abolished any more than the rest of them. I wonder the Bishops don't take it up. Well, there it is. On Saturdays she won't work, and on Sundays

she don't like to, because the other people don't.'

'Has she any religious objection,' asked Angela, 'to working on Monday or Tuesday?'

'No; and I'll send her over, Miss Kennedy, this evening, if you will see her. You'll get her cheap because no one else will have her. Very good. Then there is Nelly Sorensen. I know she would like to go out, but her father is particular. Not that he's any right to be, being a Pauper. If a man like me or the late Mr. Messenger, my friend, chooses to be particular, it's nothing but right. As for Captain Sorensen—why, it's Pride after the fall, instead of before it. Which makes it, to a substantial man, sickenin'.'

'Who is Captain Sorensen?'

'He lives in the Asylum along the Whitechapel Road, only ten minutes or so from here. Nelly Sorensen is as clever a workwoman as you will get. If I were you, Miss Kennedy, I would go and find her at home. Then you can see her work and talk to her. As for her father, keep him in his right place. Pride in an Almshouse! Why, you'd hardly believe it;

but I wanted to put his girl in a shop where they employ fifty hands, and he wouldn't have it, because he didn't like the character of the proprietor. Said he was a grinder and an oppressor. My answer to such is, and always will be, "Take it or leave it." If they won't take it, there's heaps that must. As old Mr. Messenger used to say, "Bunker, my friend," or "Bunker, my old friend," sometimes, "Your remarks is true wisdom." Yes, Miss Kennedy, I will go with you, to show you the way.' He looked at his watch. 'Half-past four. I dare say it will take half an hour there and back—which with the last quarter of an hour's talk, we shall charge as an hour's time, which is half-a-crown. Thank you. An hour,' he added, with great feeling, 'an hour, like a pint of beer, cannot be divided. And on these easy terms, Miss Kennedy, you will find me always ready to work for you from sunrise to sunset, thinking of your interests even at meals, so as not to split an hour or waste time, and to save trouble in reckoning up.'

CHAPTER VII.

THE TRINITY ALMSHOUSE.

FROM Stepney Green to the Trinity Almshouse is not a long way; you have, in fact, little more than to pass through a short street and to cross the road. But the road itself is noteworthy: for, of all the roads which lead into London or out of it, this of Whitechapel is the broadest and the noblest by nature. Man, it is true, has done little to embellish it. There are no avenues of green and spreading lime and plane trees, as, one day, there shall be: there are no stately buildings, towers, spires, miracles of architecture; but only houses and shops which, whether small or big, are all alike mean, unlovely, and depressing. Yet, in spite of all, a noble road.

This road, which is the promenade, breathing-place, place of resort, place of gossip, place of

amusement, and place of business for the greater part of East London, stretches all the way from Aldgate to Stratford, being called first the Whitechapel Road, and then the Mile End Road; then the Bow Road, and then the Stratford Road. Under the first name the road has acquired a reputation of the class called, by moralists, unenviable. The history of police-court records, under the general heading of Whitechapel Road, so many free fights, brave robberies, gallant murders, dauntless kickings, cudgellings, pummellings, pocket-pickings, shop-liftings, watch-snatchings, and assaults on constables, with such a brave display of disorderly drunks, that the road has come to be regarded with admiration as one of those Alsatian retreats, growing every day rarer, which are beyond and above the law. It is thought to be a place where manhood and personal bravery reign supreme. Yet the road is not worthy of this reputation: it has of late years become orderly; its present condition is dull and law-abiding, brilliant as the past has been, and whatever greatness may be in store for the future. Once out of Whitechapel, and within

the respectable region of Mile End, the road has always been eminently respectable; and as regards dangers quite safe, ever since they built the bridge over the River Lea, which used now and again to have freshets, and, at such times, tried to drown harmless people in its ford. Since that bridge was built in the time of Edward I., it matters not for the freshets. There is not much in the Bow Road when the stranger gets there, in his journey along this great thoroughfare, for him to visit, except its almshouses, which are many; and the beautiful old church of Bow, standing in the middle of the road, crumbling slowly away in the East End fog, with its narrow strip of crowded churchyard. One hopes that before it has quite crumbled away some one will go and make a picture of it—an etching would be best. At Stratford the road divides, so that you may turn to the right and get to Barking, or to the left and get to Epping Forest. And all the way, for four miles, a broad and noble road, which must have been carved originally out of No Man's Land, in so generous a spirit is it laid out. Angela is now planting it with trees;

beneath the trees she will set seats for those who wish to rest. Here and there she will erect drinking-fountains. Whitechapel Road, since her improvements begun, has been transformed; even the bacon shops are beginning to look a little less rusty; and the grocers are trying to live up to the green avenues.

Angela's imagination was fired by this road from the very first, when the Idle Apprentice took her into it as into a new and strange country. Here, for the first time, she realised the meaning of the universal curse, from which only herself and a few others are unnaturally exempted; and this only under heavy penalties and the necessity of finding out their own work for themselves, or it will be the worse for them. People think it better to choose their own work. That is a great mistake. You might just as well want to choose your own disease. In the West End, a good many folk do work—and work pretty hard some of them—who need not, unless they please; and a good many others work who must, whether they please or no; but somehow the forced labour is pushed into the background. We do not perceive its

presence: people drive about in carriages, as if there were nothing to do; people lounge; people have leisure; people do not look pressed, or in a hurry, or task-mastered, or told to make bricks without straw.

Here, in the East End, on the other hand, there are no strollers. All day long the place is full of passengers hasting to and fro, pushing each other aside, with set and anxious faces, each driven by the invisible scourge of necessity which makes slaves of all mankind. Do you know that famous picture of the Israelites in Egypt? Upon the great block of stone, which the poor wretches are painfully dragging, while the cruel lash goads the weak and terrifies the strong, there sits one in authority. He regards the herd of slaves with eyes terrible from their stony gaze. What is it to him whether the feeble suffer and perish, so that the Pharaoh's will be done? The people of the East reminded Angela, who was an on-looker and had no work to do, of these builders of pyramids: they worked under a taskmaster as relentless as that stony-hearted captain or foreman of works. If the Israelites desisted, they were flogged back

to work with cats of many tails: if our workmen desist, they are flogged back by starvation.

'Let us hope,' said Harry, to whom Angela imparted a portion of the above reflection and comparison,—'let us hope that the Pharaoh himself means well and is pitiful.' He spoke without his usual flippancy, so that perhaps his remark had some meaning, for himself.

All day long and all the year round there is a constant Fair going on in Whitechapel Road. It is held upon the broad pavement, which was benevolently intended, no doubt, for this purpose. Here are displayed all kinds of things; bits of second-hand furniture, such as the head of a wooden bed, whose griminess is perhaps exaggerated, in order that a purchaser may expect something extraordinarily cheap. Here are lids of pots and saucepans laid out, to show that in the warehouse, of which these things are specimens, will be found the principal parts of the utensils for sale; here are unexpected things, such as rows of skates, sold cheap in summer; light clothing in winter; workmen's tools of every kind, including, perhaps, the burglarious jemmy; second-hand

books—a miscellaneous collection, establishing the fact that the readers of books in Whitechapel—a feeble and scanty folk—read nothing at all except sermons and meditations among the tombs; second-hand boots and shoes; cutlery; hats and caps; rat-traps and mouse-traps and birdcages; flowers and seeds; skittles; and frames for photographs. Cheap-jacks have their carts beside the pavement; and with strident voice proclaim the goodness of their wares, which include in this district bloaters and dried haddocks, as well as crockery. And one is amazed, seeing how the open-air Fair goes on, why the shops are kept open at all.

And always the same. It saddens one, I know not why, to sit beside a river and see the water flowing down with never a pause. It saddens one still more to watch the current of human life in this great thoroughfare and feel that, as it is now, so it was a generation ago, and so it will be a generation hence. The bees in the hive die, and are replaced by others exactly like them, and the honey-making goes on merrily still. So, in a great street, the waggons always go up and down; the passengers never

cease; the shopboy is always behind the counter; the workgirl is always sewing; the workman is always carrying his tools as he goes to his work; there are always those who stay for half a pint, and always those who hurry on. In this endless drama, which repeats itself like a musical box, the *jeune premier* of to day becomes to-morrow the lean and slippered pantaloon. The day after to-morrow he will have disappeared, gone to join the silent ones in the grim, unlovely cemetery belonging to the Tower Hamlets, which lies beyond Stepney, and is the reason why on Sundays the 'frequent funeral blackens all the road.'

'One can moralise,' said Harry one day, after they had been exchanging sentiments of enjoyable sadness, 'at this rate for ever. But it has all been done before.'

'Everything, I suppose,' replied Angela, 'has been done before. If it has not been done by me, it is new—to me. It does not make it any better for a man who has to work all the days of his life, and gets no enjoyment out of it, and lives ignobly and dies obscurely, that the same thing happens to most people.'

'We cannot help ourselves.' This time it was the Cabinet-maker who spoke to the Dressmaker. 'We belong to the crowd, and we must live with the crowd. You can't make much glory out of a mercenary lathe nor out of a dressmaker's shop, can you, Miss Kennedy?'

It was by such reminders, one to the other, that conversations of the most delightful kind, full of speculations and comparisons, were generally brought up short. When Angela remembered that she was talking to an artisan, she froze. When Harry reflected that it was a dressmaker to whom he was communicating bits of his inner soul, he checked himself. When, which happened every day, they forgot their disguises for a while, they talked quite freely, and very prettily communicated all sorts of thoughts, fancies, and opinions to each other; insomuch that once or twice a disagreeable feeling would cross the girl's mind that they were perhaps getting too near the line at which 'keeping company' begins; but he was a young workman of good taste, and he never presumed.

She was walking beside her guide, Mr.

Bunker, and pondering over these things as she gazed down the broad road, and recollected the talk she had held in it; and now her heart was warm within her, because of the things she thought and had tried to say.

'Here we are, Miss,' said Mr. Bunker, stopping. 'Here's the Trinity Almshouse.'

She awoke from her dream. It is very odd to consider the strange thoughts which flash upon one in waking. Angela suddenly discovered that Mr. Bunker possessed a remarkable resemblance to a bear. His walk was something like one, with a swing of the shoulders, and his hands were big and his expression was hungry. Yes, he was exactly like a bear.

She observed that she was standing at a wicket-gate, and that over the gate was the effigy of a ship in full sail done in stone. Mr. Bunker opened the door, and led the way to the court within.

Then a great stillness fell upon the girl's spirit. Outside, the waggons, carts, and omnibuses thundered and rolled. You could hear them plainly enough; you could hear the tramp of a thousand feet. But the noise outside was

only a contrast to the quiet within. A wall of brick with iron railings separated the tumult from the calm. It seemed as if, within that court, there was no noise at all, so sharp and sudden was the contrast.

She stood in an oblong court, separated from the road by the wall above-named. On either hand was a row of small houses, containing, apparently, four rooms each. They were built of red brick, and were bright and clean. Every house had an iron tank in front for water; there was a pavement of flags along this row, and a grass lawn occupied the middle of the court. Upon the grass stood the statue of a benefactor, and at the end of the court was a chapel. It was a very little chapel, but was approached by a most enormous and disproportionate flight of stone steps, which might have been originally cut for a portal of St. Paul's Cathedral. The steps were surmounted by a great doorway, which occupied the whole west front of the chapel. No one was moving about the place except an old lady, who was drawing water from her tank.

'Pretty place, ain't it?' asked Mr. Bunker.

'It seems peaceful and quiet,' said the girl.

'Place where you'd expect Pride, ain't it?' he went on scornfully. 'Oh! yes. Paupers and Pride go together, as is well known. Lowliness is for them who've got a bank and money in it. Oh, yes, of course. Gar! The Pride of an Inmate!'

He led the way, making a most impertinent echo with the heels of his boots. Angela observed, immediately, that there was another court beyond the first. In fact, it was larger: the houses were of stone, and of greater size; and it was if anything more solemnly quiet. It was possessed of silence.

Here there is another statue erected to the memory of the Founder, who, it is stated on the pedestal, died, being then 'Comander of a Shipp' in the East Indies, in the year 1686. The gallant captain is represented in the costume of the period. He wears a coat with many buttons, large cuffs, and full skirts; the coat is buttoned a good way below the waist, showing the fair doublet within, also provided with many buttons. He wears shoes with buckles, has a soft silk wrapper round his neck, and a sash to carry his

sword. On his head there is an enormous wig, well adapted to serve the purpose for which Solar Topees were afterwards invented. In his right hand he carries a sextant, many sizes bigger than those in modern use, and at his feet dolphins sport. A grass lawn covers this court, as well as the other, and no voice or sound ever comes from any of the houses, whose occupants might well be all dead.

Mr. Bunker turned to the right, and presently rapped with his knuckles at a door. Then, without waiting for a reply, he turned the handle, and with a nod invited his companion to follow him.

It was a small but well-proportioned room with low ceiling, furnished sufficiently. There were clean white curtains with rose-coloured ribbons. The window was open, and in it stood a pot of mignonette, now at its best. At the window sat, on one side, an old gentleman with silvery white hair and spectacles, who was reading, and on the other side a girl with work on her lap, sewing.

'Now, Cap'n Sorensen,' said Mr. Bunker, without the formality of greeting, 'I've got you

another chance. Take it or leave it, since you can afford to be particular. I can't; I'm not rich enough. Ha!' He snorted and looked about him with the contempt which a man who has a Banker naturally feels for one who hasn't, and lives in an Almshouse.

'What is the chance?' asked the Inmate meekly, looking up. When he saw Angela in the doorway he rose and bowed, offering her a chair. Angela observed that he was a very tall old man, and that he had blue eyes and a rosy face—quite a young face it looked—and was gentle of speech and courteous in demeanour. 'Is the chance connected with this young lady, Mr. Bunker?'

'It is,' said the great man. 'Miss Kennedy, this is the young woman I told you of. This young lady'—he indicated Angela—'is setting herself up, in a genteel way, in the dressmaking line. She's taken one of my houses on the Green, and she wants hands to begin with. She comes here, Cap'n Sorensen, on my recommendation.'

'We are obliged to you, Mr. Bunker.'

The girl was standing, her work in her

hands, looking at Angela, and a little terrified by the sight of so grand a person. The dress-makers of her experience were not young and beautiful; mostly they were pinched with years, troubles, and anxieties. When Angela began to notice her, she saw that the young work-girl, who seemed about nineteen years of age, was tall, rather too thin, and pretty. She did not look strong, but her cheeks were flushed with a delicate bloom; her eyes, like her father's, were blue; her hair was light and feathery, though she brushed it as straight as it would go. She was dressed, like most girls of her class, in a frock of sober black.

Angela took her by the hand. 'I am sure,' she said kindly, 'that we shall be friends.'

'Friends!' cried Mr. Bunker, aghast. 'Why, she's to be one of your girls. You *can't* be friends with your own girls.'

'Perhaps,' said the girl, blushing and abashed, 'you would like to see some of my work.' She spread out her work on the table.

'Fine weather here, Cap'n,' Mr. Bunker went on, striking an attitude of patronage, as if the sun was good indeed to shine on an Alms-

house. 'Fine weather should make grateful hearts, especially in them as is provided for—having been improvident in their youth—with comfortable roofs to shelter them.'

'Grateful hearts, indeed, Mr. Bunker,' said the Captain quietly.

'Mr. Bunker'—Angela turned upon him with an air of command, and pointed to the door—'you may go now. You have done all I wanted.'

Mr. Bunker turned very red. 'He could go!' Was he to be ordered about by every little dressmaker? 'He could go!'

'If the lady engages my daughter, Mr. Bunker,' said Captain Sorensen, 'I will try to find the five shillings next week.'

'Five shillings!' cried Angela. 'Why, I have just given him five shillings for his recommendation.'

Mr. Bunker did not explain that his practice was to get five shillings from both sides, but he retreated with as much dignity as could be expected.

He asked, outside, with shame, how it was that he allowed himself thus to be sat upon and

ordered out of the house by a mere girl. Why had he not stood upon his dignity? To be told he might go, and before an Inmate—a common Pauper!

There is one consolation always open, thank Heaven, for the meanest amongst us poor worms of earth. We are gifted with imaginations; we can make the impossible an actual fact, and can with the eye of the mind make the unreal stand before us in the flesh. Therefore, when we are down-trodden, we may proceed, without the trouble and danger of turning (which has been known to bring total extinction upon a worm), to take revenge upon our enemy in imagination. Mr. Bunker, who was at this moment uncertain whether he hated Miss Kennedy more than he hated his nephew, went home glowing with the thought that but a few short months would elapse before he should be able to set his foot upon the former and crush her. Because, at the rate she was going on, she would not last more than that time. Then would he send in his bills, sue her, sell her up, and drive her out of the place stripped of the last farthing. 'He might go!' He, Bunker, was told that he might

go! And in the presence of an Inmate! Then he thought of his nephew, and while he smote the pavement with the iron end of his umbrella, a cold dew appeared upon his nose, the place where inward agitation is frequently betrayed in this way, and he shivered, looking about him suddenly as if he was frightened. Yet, what harm was Harry Goslett likely to do him?

'What is your name, my dear?' asked Angela softly, and without any inspection of the work on the table. She was wondering how this pretty, fragile flower should be found in Whitechapel. Oh, ignorance of Newnham! For she might have reflected that the rarest and most delightful plants are found in the most savage places—there is beautiful botanising, one is told, in the Ural Mountains; and that the sun shines everywhere, even, as Mr. Bunker remarked, in an Almshouse; and that she herself had gathered in the ugliest ditches round Cambridge the sweetest flowering mosses, the tenderest campion, the loveliest little herb-robert.

'My name is Ellen,' replied the girl.

'I call her Nelly,' her father answered, 'and she is a good girl. Will you sit down, Miss Kennedy?'

Angela sat down and proceeded to business. She said, addressing the old man, but looking at the child, that she was setting up a dressmaker's shop; that she had hopes of support, even from the West End, where she had friends; that she was prepared to pay the proper wages, with certain other advantages, of which more would be said later on; and that, if Captain Sorensen approved, she would engage his daughter from that day.

'I have only been out as an improver as yet,' said Nelly. 'But if you will really try me as a dressmaker—oh, father, it is sixteen shillings a week!'

Angela's heart smote her. A poor sixteen shillings a week! And this girl was delighted at the chance of getting so much.

'What do you say, Captain Sorensen! Do you want references, as Mr. Bunker did? I am the granddaughter of a man who was born here and made—a little—money here, which he left to me. Will you let her come to me?'

'You are the first person,' said Captain Sorensen, 'who ever, in this place, where work is not so plentiful as hands, offered work as if taking it was a favour to you.'

'I want good girls—and nice girls,' said Angela. 'I want a house where we shall all be friends.'

The old sailor shook his head.

'There is no such house here,' he said sadly. 'It is "take it or leave it"—if you won't take it, others will. Make the poor girls your friends, Miss Kennedy? You look and talk like a lady born and bred, and I fear you will be put upon. Make friends of your servants? Why, Mr. Bunker will tell you that Whitechapel does not carry on business that way. But it is good of you to try, and I am sure you will not scold and drive like the rest.'

'You offended Mr. Bunker, I learn, by refusing a place which he offered,' said Angela.

'Yes; God knows if I did right. We are desperately poor, else we should not be here. That you may see for yourself. Yet, my blood boiled when I heard the character of the man

whom my Nelly was to serve. I could not let her go. She is all I have, Miss Kennedy'—the old man drew the girl towards him and held her, his arm round her waist. 'If you will take her and treat her kindly, you will have—it isn't worth anything, perhaps—the gratitude of one old man in this world—soon in the next.'

'Trust your daughter with me, Captain Sorensen,' Angela replied, with tears in her eyes.

'Everybody round here is poor,' he went on. 'That makes people hard-hearted; there are too many people in trade, and that makes them mean; they are all trying to undersell each other, and that makes them full of tricks and cheating. They treat the workgirls worst because they cannot stand up for themselves. The long hours, and the bad food, and the poisonous air—think a little of your girls, Miss Kennedy. But you will—you will.'

'I will, Captain Sorensen.'

'It seems worse to us old sailors,' he went on. 'We have had a hardish life, but it has been in open air. Old sailors haven't had to

cheat and lie for a living. And we haven't been brought up to think of girls turning night into day, and working sixteen hours on end at twopence an hour. It is hard to think of my poor girl——' he stopped and clenched his fist. 'Better to starve than to work in such a mill!' He was thinking of the place which he had refused.

'Let us try each other, Nelly,' she said, kissing her on the forehead.

The Captain took his hat to escort her as far as the gate.

'A quiet place,' he said, looking round the little court, 'and a happy place for the last days of improvident old men like me. Yet some of us grumble. Forgive my plain speech about the work.'

'There is nothing to forgive, indeed, Captain Sorensen. Will you let me call upon you sometimes?'

She gave him her hand. He bowed over it with the courtesy of a captain on his own quarter-deck. When she turned away she saw that a tear was standing in his eyes.

'Father!' cried Nelly, rushing into his arms, 'did you ever see anybody like her? Oh! oh! do you think I really shall do for her?'

'You will do your best, my dear. It is a long time, I think, since I have seen and spoken with any one like that. In the old days I've had passengers to Calcutta like her; but none more so, Nelly—no, never one more so.'

'You couldn't, father.' His daughter wanted no explanation of this mysterious qualification. 'You couldn't. She is a lady, father;' she looked up and laughed.

'It's a funny thing for a real lady to open a dressmaker's shop on Stepney Green, isn't it?'

Remark, if you please, that this girl had never once before, in all her life, conversed with a lady; using the word in the prejudiced and narrow sense peculiar to the West End. Yet, she discovered instantly the truth. Whence this instinct? It is a world full of strange and wonderful things; the more questions we ask,

the more we may; and the more things we consider, the more incomprehensible does the sum of things appear. Inquiring reader, I do not know how Nelly divined that her visitor was a lady.

CHAPTER VIII.

WHAT HE GOT BY IT.

A DRESSMAKER'S shop, without a dressmaker to manage it, would be, Angela considered, in some perplexity, like a ship without a steersman. She therefore awaited with some impatience the promised visit of Rebekah Hermitage, whom she was to 'get cheap,' according to Bunker, on account of her Sabbatarian views.

She came in the evening, while Angela was walking on the Green with the sprightly Cabinet-maker. It was sunset, and Angela had been remarking to her companion, with a sort of irrational surprise, that the phenomena coincident with the close of the day are just as brilliantly coloured and lavishly displayed for the squalid East as for the luxurious West. Perhaps, indeed, there are not many places in

London where sunset does produce such good effects as at Stepney Green. The narrow strip, so called, in shape resembles too nearly a closed umbrella or a thickish walking-stick; but there are trees in it, and beds of flowers, and seats for those who wish to sit, and walks for those who wish to walk. And the better houses of the Green—Bormalack's was on the west, or dingy side—are on the east, and face the setting sun. They are of a good age, at least a hundred and fifty years old; they are built of a warm red brick, and some have doors ornamented with the old-fashioned shell, and all have an appearance of solid respectability, which makes the rest of Stepney proud of them. Here, in former days, dwelt the aristocracy of the parish; and on this side was the house taken by Angela for her dressmaking institution, the house in which her grandfather was born. The reason why the sunsets are more splendid and the sunrises brighter at Stepney than at the opposite end of London, is, that the sun sets behind the great bank of cloud which for ever lies over London town. This lends his departure to the happy dwellers

of the East strange and wonderful effects. Now, when he rises, it is naturally in the East, where there is no cloud of smoke to hide the brightness of his face.

The Green this evening was crowded: it is not so fashionable a promenade as Whitechapel Road, but, on the other hand, it possesses the charm of comparative quiet. There is no noise of vehicles, but only the shouting of children, the loud laughter of some *gaillard* 'prentice, the coy giggle of the young lady to whom he has imparted his latest merry jape, the loud whispers of ladies who are exchanging confidences about their complaints and the complaints of their friends, and the musical laugh of girls. The old people had all crept home; the mothers were at home putting their children to bed; the fathers were mostly engaged with the evening pipe, which demands a chair within four walls and a glass of something; the Green was given up to youth; and youth was principally given up to love-making.

'In Arcadia,' said Harry, 'every nymph is wooed, and every swain——'

He was interrupted by the arrival of his

uncle, who pushed his way through the crowd with his usual important bustle, followed by a 'young person.'

'I looked for you at Mrs. Bormalack's,' he said to Angela reproachfully, 'and here you are—with this young man, as usual. As if my time was no object to you!'

'Why not with this young man, Mr. Bunker?' asked Angela.

He did not explain his reasons for objecting to her companion, but proceeded to introduce his companion.

'Here she is, Miss Kennedy,' he said. 'This is Rebekah Hermitage; I've brought her with me to prevent mistakes. You may take her on my recommendation. Nobody, in the neighbourhood of Stepney, wants a better recommendation than mine. One of Bunker's, they say, and they ask no more.'

'What a beautiful, what an enviable reputation!' murmured his nephew. 'Oh, that I were one of Bunker's!'

Mr. Bunker glared at him, but answered not; never, within his present experience, had he found himself at a loss to give indignation

words. On occasion, he had been known to swear 'into shudders' the immortal gods who heard him. To swear at this nephew, however, this careless sniggering youth, who looked and talked like a 'swell,' would, he felt, be more than useless. The boy would only snigger more. He would have liked knocking him down, but there were obvious reasons way this was not to be seriously contemplated.

He turned to the girl who had come with him.

'Rebekah,' he said with condescension, 'you may speak up; I told your father I would stand by you, and I will.'

'Do not, at least,' said Angela, in her stateliest manner, 'begin by making Miss Hermitage suppose she will want your support.'

She saw before her a girl about two- or three-and-twenty years of age. She was short of stature and sturdy. Her complexion was dark, with black hair and dark eyes, and these were bright. A firm mouth and square chin gave her a pugnacious appearance. In fact, she had been fighting all her life, more desperately even than the other girls about her,

because she was heavily handicapped by the awkwardness of her religion.

'Mr. Bunker,' said this young person, who certainly did not look as if she wanted any backing up, 'tells me you want a forewoman.'

'You want a forewoman,' echoed the agent, as if interpreting for her.

'Yes, I do,' Angela replied. 'I know, to begin with, all about your religious opinions.'

'She knows,' said the agent, standing between the two parties, as if retained for the interests of both,—'she knows, already, your religious opinions.'

'Very well, Miss.' Rebekah looked disappointed at losing a chance of expounding them. 'Then, I can only say, I can never give way in the matter of truth.'

'In truth,' said the agent, 'she's as obstinate as a pig.'

'I do not expect it,' replied Angela, feeling that the half-a-crown-an-hour man was really a stupendous nuisance.

'She does not expect it,' echoed Mr. Bunker, turning to Rebekah. 'What did I

tell you?—now you see the effect of my recommendations.'

'Take it off the wages,' said Rebekah, with an obvious effort, which showed how vital was the importance of the pay. 'Take it off the wages, if you like; and, of course, I can't expect to labour for five days and be paid for six; but on the Saturday, which is the Sabbath day, I do no work therein, neither I, nor my manservant, nor my maidservant, nor my ox, nor my ass.'

'Neither her manservant, nor her maidservant, nor her ox, nor her ass,' repeated the agent solemnly.

'There is the Sunday, however,' said Angela.

'What have you got to say about Sunday, now?' asked Mr. Bunker, with a change of front.

'Of all the days that's in the week,' interpolated the sprightly one, 'I dearly love but one day—and that's the day——'

Rebekah, impatient of this frivolity, stopped it at once.

'I do as little as I can,' she said, 'on

Sunday, because of the weaker brethren. The Sunday we keep as a holiday.'

'Well——' Angela began rather to envy this young woman, who was a clear gainer of a whole day by her religion; 'well, Miss Hermitage, will you come to me on trial? Thank you, we can settle about deductions afterwards, if you please. And if you will come to-morrow —that is right. Now, if you please to take a turn with me, we will talk things over together; good-night, Mr. Bunker!'

She took the girl's arm and led her away, being anxious to get Bunker out of sight. The aspect of this agent annoyed and irritated her almost beyond endurance; so she left him with his nephew.

'One of Bunker's!' Harry repeated softly.

'You here!' growled the uncle; 'dangling after a girl when you ought to be at work! How long, I should like to know, are we hard-working Stepney folk to be troubled with an idle, good-for-nothing vagabond? Eh, sir? How long? And don't suppose that I mean to do anything for you when your money is all gone. Do you hear, sir? do you hear?'

'I hear, my uncle!' As usual, the young man laughed; he sat upon the arm of a garden seat, with his hands in his pockets, and laughed an insolent, exasperating laugh. Now, Mr. Bunker in all his life had never seen the least necessity or occasion for laughing at anything at all, far less at himself. Nor, hitherto, had any one dared to laugh at him.

'Sniggerin' peacock!' added Mr. Bunker fiercely, rattling a bunch of keys in his pocket.

Harry laughed again, with more *abandon*. This uncle of his, who regarded him with so much dislike, seemed a very humorous person.

'Connection by marriage,' he said,—'there is one question I have very much wished to put to you. When you traded me away, now three-and-twenty years ago, or thereabouts—you remember the circumstances, I dare say, better than I can be expected to do—*what did you get for me?*'

Then Bunker's colour changed, his cheeks became quite white. Harry thought it was the effect of wrath, and went on.

'Half-a-crown an hour, of course, during the negotiations, which I dare say took a week

—that we understand; but what else? come, my uncle, what else did you get?'

It was too dark for the young man to perceive the full effect of this question—the sudden change of colour escaped his notice; but he observed a strange and angry light in his uncle's eyes, and he saw that he opened his mouth once or twice as if to speak, but shut his lips again without saying a word; and Harry was greatly surprised to see his uncle presently turn on his heel and walk straight away.

'That question seems to be a facer; it must be repeated whenever the good old man becomes offensive. I wonder what he *did* get for me?'

As for Mr. Bunker, he retired to his own house in Beaumont Square, walking with quick step and hanging head. He let himself in with his latch-key, and turned into his office, which, of course, was the first room of the ground-floor.

It was quite dark now, save for the faint light from the street gas, but Mr. Bunker did not want any light.

He sat down and rested his face on his

hands, with a heavy sigh. The house was empty, because his housekeeper and only servant was out. He sat without moving for half an hour or so; then he lifted his head, and looked about him—he had forgotten where he was and why he came there—and he shuddered.

Then he hastily lit a candle, and went upstairs to his own bedroom. The room had one piece of furniture, not always found in bedrooms: it was a good-sized fireproof safe, which stood in the corner. Mr. Bunker placed his candle on the safe, and stooping down began to grope about with his keys for the lock. It took some time to find the keyhole; when the safe was opened, it took longer time to find the papers which he wanted, for these were at the very back of all. Presently, however, he lifted his head, with a bundle in his hand.

Now, if we are obliged to account for everything, which ought not to be expected, and is more than one asks of scientific men, I should account for what followed by remarking that the blood is apt to get into the brains of people, especially elderly people, and above all,

stout, elderly people, when they stoop for any length of time; and that history records many remarkable manifestations of the spirit world which have followed a posture of stooping too prolonged. It produces, in fact, a condition of brain beloved by ghosts. There is the leading case of the man at Cambridge who, after stooping for a book, saw the ghost of his own bed-maker at a time when he knew her to be in the bosom of her family eating up his bread-and-butter and drinking his tea. Rats have been seen by others—troops of rats—as many rats as followed the Piper, where there were no rats; and there is even the recorded case of a man who saw the ghost of himself, which prognosticated dissolution, and, in fact, killed him exactly fifty-two years after the event. So that, really, there is nothing at all unusual in the fact that Mr. Bunker saw something, when he lifted his head. The remarkable thing is that he saw the very person of whom he had been thinking ever since his nephew's question—no other than his deceased wife's sister; he had never loved her at all, or in the least desired to marry her, which makes the case more remarkable still;

and she stood before him, just as if she was alive, and gazed upon him with reproachful eyes.

He behaved with great coolness and presence of mind. Few men would have shown more bravery. He just dropped the candle out of one hand and the papers out of the other, and fell back upon the bed with a white face and quivering lips. Some men would have run—he did not; in fact, he could not. His knees instinctively knew that it is useless to run from a ghost, and refused to aid him.

'Caroline!' he groaned.

As he spoke the figure vanished, making no sign and saying no word. After a while, seeing that the ghost came no more, Mr. Bunker pulled himself together. He picked up the papers and the candle, and went slowly downstairs again, turning every moment to see if his sister-in-law came too. But she did not, and he went to the bright gas-lit back parlour, where his supper was spread.

After supper he mixed a glass of brandy-and-water, stiff. After drinking this, he mixed

another, and began to smoke a pipe while he turned over the papers.

'He can't have meant anything,' he said. 'What should the boy know? What did the gentleman know? nothing. What does anybody know? nothing. There's nobody left. The will was witnessed by Mr. Messenger and Bob Coppin. Well, one of them is dead, and as for the other'—he paused and winced—'as for the other, it is five-and-twenty years since he was heard of, so he's dead, too; of course, he's dead.'

Then he remembered the spectre, and he trembled. For suppose Caroline meant coming often; this would be particularly disagreeable. He remembered a certain scene where, three-and-twenty years before, he had stood at a bedside while a dying woman spoke to him; the words she said were few, and he remembered them quite well, even after so long a time, which shows his real goodness of heart.

'You are a hard man, Bunker, and you think too much of money, and you were not kind to your wife. But I'm going too, and there is nobody left to trust my boy to, except

you. Be good to him, Bunker, for your dead wife's sake.'

He remembered, too, how he had promised to be good to the boy, not meaning much by the words, perhaps, but softened by the presence of death.

'It is not as if the boy was penniless,' she said; 'his houses will pay you for his keep, and to spare. You will lose nothing by him. Promise me, again.'

He remembered that he had promised a second time that he would be good to the boy; and he remembered, too, how the promise seemed then to involve great expense in canes.

'If you break the solemn promise,' she said, with feminine prescience, 'I warn you that he shall do you an injury when he grows up. Remember that.'

He did remember it now, though he had quite forgotten this detail a long while ago. The boy had returned; he was grown up; he could do him an injury, *if he knew how*. Because he only had to ask his uncle for an account of those houses. Fortunately, he did not know. Happily, there was no one to tell

him. With his third tumbler Mr. Bunker became quite confident and reassured; with his fourth he felt inclined to be merry, and to slap himself on the back for wide-awakedness of the rarest kind. With his fifth he resolved to go upstairs and tell Caroline that unless she went and told her son, no one would. He carried part of this resolution into effect; that is to say, he went to his bedroom, and his housekeeper, unobserved herself, had the pleasure of seeing her master ascending the stairs on his hands and feet, a method which offers great advantages to a gentleman who has had five tumblers of brandy and water.

When he got there, and had quite succeeded in shutting the door—not always so easy a thing as it looks—Caroline was no longer visible. He could not find her anywhere, though he went all round the room twice, on all-fours, in search of her.

The really remarkable part of this story is, that she has never paid a visit to her son at all.

Meantime, the strollers on the Green were grown few. Most of them had gone home;

but the air was warm, and there were still some who lingered. Among them were Angela and the girl who was to be her forewoman.

When Rebekah found that her employer was not apparently of those who try to cheat, or bully, or cajole her subordinates, she lost her combative air, and consented to talk about things. She gave Angela a great deal of information about the prospects of her venture, which were gloomy, she thought, as the competition was so severe. She also gave her an insight into details of a practical nature concerning the conduct of a dress-makery, into which we need not follow her.

Angela discovered before they parted that she had two sides to her character; on one side she was a practical and practised woman of work and business, on the other she was a religious fanatic.

'We wait,' she said, 'for the world to come round to us. Oh! I know we are but a little body and a poor folk. Father is almost alone; but what a thing it is to be the appointed keepers of the truth! Come and hear us, Miss Kennedy. Father always converts any one who will listen to him. Oh, do listen!'

Then she, too, went away, and Angela was left alone in the quiet place. Presently she became aware that Harry was standing beside her.

'Don't let us go home yet,' he said; 'Bormalack's is desperately dull—you can picture it all to yourself. The Professor has got a new trick; Daniel Fagg is looking as if he had met with more disappointment; her ladyship is short of temper, because the Case is getting on so slowly; and Josephus is sighing over a long pipe; and Mr. Maliphant is chuckling to himself in the corner. On the whole, it is better here. Shall we remain a little longer in the open air, Miss Kennedy?'

He looked dangerous. Angela, who had been disposed to be expansive, froze.

'We will have one more turn, if you please, Mr. Goslett.' She added stiffly, 'Only remember—so long as you don't think of "keeping company."'

'I understand, perfectly, Miss Kennedy. "Society" is a better word than "company;" let us keep that, and make a new departure for Stepney Green'

CHAPTER IX.

THE DAY BEFORE THE FIRST.

Mr. Bunker, *en bon chrétien*, dissembled his wrath, and continued his good work of furnishing and arranging the house for Angela, insomuch that before many days the place was completely ready for opening.

In the meantime Miss Kennedy was away—she went away on business—and Bormalack's was dull without her. Harry found some consolation in superintending some of the work for her house, and in working at a grand cabinet which he designed for her: it was to be a miracle of wood-carving; he would throw into the work all the resources of his art and all his genius. When she came back, after the absence of a week, she looked full of business and of care. Harry thought it must be money worries, and began to curse Bunker's long bill;

but she was gracious to him in her queenly way. Moreover, she assured him that all was going on well with her, better than she could have hoped. The evening before the 'Stepney Dressmakers' Association' was to open its doors, they all gathered together in the newly furnished house for a final inspection—Angela, her two *aides* Rebekah and Nelly, and the young man against whose companionship Mr. Bunker had warned her in vain. The house was large, with rooms on either side the door. These were showrooms and workrooms. The first floor Angela reserved for her own purposes, and she was mysterious about them.

At the back of the house stretched a long and ample garden. Angela had the whole of it covered with asphalte; the beds of flowers or lawns were all covered over. At the end she had caused to be built a large room of glass, the object of which she had not yet disclosed.

As regards the appointments of the house, she had taken one precaution—Rebekah superintended them. Mr. Bunker, therefore, was fain to restrict his enthusiasm, and could not charge more than twenty or thirty per cent.

above the market value for the things. But Rebekah, though she faithfully carried out her instructions, could not but feel disappointed at the lavish scale in which things were ordered and paid for. The showrooms were as fine as if the place were Regent Street; the work-rooms were looked after with as much care for ventilation as if, Mr. Bunker said, workgirls were countesses.

'It is too good,' Rebekah expostulated, 'much too good for us. It will only make other girls discontented.'

'I want to make them discontented,' Angela replied. 'Unless they are discontented, there will be no improvement. Think, Rebekah, what it is that lifts men out of the level of the beasts. We find out that there are better things, and we are fighting our way upwards. That is the mystery of Discontent—and perhaps of Pain, as well.'

'Ah!' Rebekah saw that this was not a practical answer. 'But you don't know, yet, the competition of the East End, and the straits we are put to. It is not as at the West End.'

The golden West is ever the Land of

Promise. No need to undeceive: let her go on in the belief that the three thousand girls who wait and work about Regent Street and the great shops are everywhere treated generously, and paid above the market value of their services. I make no doubt, myself, that many a great West End mercer sits down when Christmas warms his heart, in his mansion at Finchley, Campden Hill, FitzJohn's Avenue, or Stoke Newington, and writes great cheques as gifts to the uncomplaining girls who build up his income.

'She would learn soon,' said Rebekah, hoping that the money would last out till the ship was fairly launched.

She was not suspicious, but there was something 'funny,' as Nelly said, in a girl of Miss Kennedy's stamp coming among them. Why did she choose Stepney Green? Surely, Bond Street or Regent Street would be better fitted for a lady of her manners. How would customers be received and orders be taken? By herself, or by this young lady, who would certainly treat the ladies of Stepney with little of that deferential courtesy which they expected

of these dressmakers? For, as you may have remarked, the lower you descend, as well as the higher you climb, the more deference do the ladies receive at the hands of their tender folk. No duchess sweeps into a milliner's showroom with more dignity than her humble sister at Clare Market on a Saturday evening displays when she accepts the invitation of the butcher to rally up, ladies, and selects her Sunday's piece of beef. The Ladies of Stepney and the Mile End Road, thought Rebekah, look for attention. Would Miss Kennedy give it to them? If Miss Kennedy herself did not attend to the showroom, what would she do?

On this evening, after they had walked over the whole house, visited the asphalted garden, and looked into the great glass-room, Angela unfolded her plans.

It was in the workroom. She stood at the head of the table, looking about her with an air of pride and anxiety. It was her own design—her own scheme; small as it was, compared with that other vast project, she was anxious about it. It *had* to succeed; it *must* succeed.

All its success, she thought, depended upon that sturdy little fanatical Seventh-Day young person. It was she who was to rule the place and be the practical dressmaker. And now she was to be told.

'Now,' said Angela, with some hesitation, 'the time has come for an explanation of the way we shall work. First of all, will you, Rebekah, undertake the management and control of the business?'

'I, Miss Kennedy? But what is your department?'

'I will undertake the management of the girls—' she stopped and blushed—'*out of their work-time.*'

At this extraordinary announcement the two girls looked blankly at their employer.

'You do not quite understand,' Angela went on. 'Wait a little. Do you consent, Rebekah?'

The girl's eyes flashed and her cheeks became aflame. Then she thought of the sudden promotion of Joseph in Egypt, and she took confidence. Perhaps she really was equal to the place; perhaps she had actually merited the distinction.

'Very well, then,' Miss Kennedy went on, as if it was the most natural thing in the world that a humble workwoman should be suddenly raised to the proud post of manager. 'Very well: that is settled. You, Nelly, will try to take care of the workroom when Rebekah is not there. As regards the accounts——'

'I can keep them too,' said Rebekah. 'I shall work—on Sundays,' she added with a blush.

Miss Kennedy then proceeded to expound her views as regards the management of her establishment.

'The girls will be here at nine,' she said.

Rebekah nodded. There could be no objection to that.

'They will work from nine till eleven.' Rebekah started. 'Yes, I know what I mean. The long hours of sitting and bending the back over work are just as bad a thing for girls of fifteen or so as could be invented. At eleven, therefore, we shall have, all of us, half an hour's exercise.'

Exercise? Exercise in a dressmaker's shop? Was Miss Kennedy in her senses?

'Exercise. You see that asphalte. Surely some of you can guess what it is for?' She looked at Harry.

'Skittles?' he suggested.

'No. Lawn tennis. Well! why not?'

'What is lawn tennis?' asked Nelly.

'A game, my dear; and you shall learn it.'

'I never play games,' said Rebekah. 'A serious person has no room in her life for games.'

'Then call it exercise, and you will be able to play it without wounding your conscience.' This was Harry's remark. 'Why not, indeed, Miss Kennedy? The game of lawn tennis, Nelly,' he went on to explain, 'is greatly in vogue among the bloated aristocracy, as my cousin Dick will tell you. That it should descend to you and me and the likes of us is nothing less than a social revolution.'

Nelly smiled, but she only half understood this kind of language. A man who laughed at things, and talked of things as if they were meant to be laughed over, was a creature she had never before met with. My friends, lay this to heart, and ponder. It is not until a

certain standard of cultivation is reached that people do laugh at things. They only began in the last century, and then only in a few *salons*. When all the world laughs, the perfection of humanity will have been reached, and the comedy will have been played out.

'It is a beautiful game,' said Angela, meaning Lawn Tennis, not the Comedy of Humanity. 'It requires a great deal of skill and exercises a vast quantity of muscles; and it costs nothing. Asphalte makes a perfect court, as I know very well.' She blushed, because she was thinking of the Newnham courts. 'We shall be able to play there, whenever it does not rain. When it does, there is the glass house.'

'What are you going to do in the glass house?' asked Harry; 'throw stones at other people's windows? That is said to be very good exercise.'

'I am going to set up a gymnasium for the girls.'

Rebekah stared, but said nothing. This was revolutionary, indeed.

'If they please, the girls can bring their friends; we will have a course of gymnastics as

well as a school for lawn tennis. You see, Mr. Goslett, that I have not forgotten what you said once.'

'What was that, Miss Kennedy? It is very good of you to remember anything that I have said. Do you mean that I once, accidentally, said a thing worth hearing?'

'Yes; you said that money was not wanted here so much as work. That is what I remembered. If you can afford it, you may work with us, for there is a great deal to do.'

'I can afford it for a time.'

'We shall work again from half-past eleven until one. Then we shall stop for dinner.'

'They bring their own dinner,' said Rebekah. 'It takes them five minutes to eat it. You will have to give them tea.'

'No; I shall give them dinner too. And because growing girls are dainty and sometimes cannot fancy things, I think a good way will be for each of them, even the youngest, to take turns in ordering the dinner and seeing it prepared.'

Rebekah groaned. What profits could

stand up against such lavish expenditure as this?

'After an hour for dinner we shall go to work again. I have thought a good deal about the afternoon, which is the most tedious part of the day, and I think the best thing will be to have reading aloud.'

'Who is to read?' cried Rebekah.

'We shall find somebody or other. Tea at five, and work from six to seven. That is my programme.'

'Then, Miss Kennedy,' cried her forewoman, 'you will be a ruined woman in a year.'

'No'—she shook her head with her gracious smile—'no, I hope not. And I think you will find that we shall be very far from ruined. Have a little faith. What do you think, Nelly?'

'Oh, I think it beautiful!' she replied, with a gaze of soft worship in her limpid eyes. 'It is so beautiful that it must be a dream, and cannot last.'

'What do you say, Mr. Goslett?'

'I say that cabinet-making ought to be con-

ducted in the same liberal spirit. But I am afraid it won't pay.'

Then Miss Kennedy took them to the room on the first floor. The room at the back was fitted as a dining room, quite simply, with a dozen chairs and a long table. Plates, cups, and things were ranged upon shelves as if in a kitchen.

She led them to the front room. When her hand was on the lock she turned and smiled, and held up her finger as if to prepare them for a surprise.

The floor was painted and bare of carpet; the windows were dressed with pretty curtains. There were sconces on the walls for candles; in the recess stood her piano; and for chairs there were two or three rout seats ranged along the wall.

'What is this?' asked Rebekah.

'My dear, girls want play as well as work. The more innocent play they get, the better for them. This is a room where we shall play all sorts of things: sometimes we shall dance; sometimes we shall act; sometimes we shall sing; sometimes we shall read poetry or tales;

sometimes we shall romp ; the girls shall bring their friends here as well as to the gymnasium and the lawn tennis, if they please.'

'And who is to pay for all this?' asked Rebekah.

'My friends,' said Angela, colouring, because this was a crisis, and to be suspected at such a point would have been fatal,—'my friends, I have to make a confession to you. I have worked out the design by myself. I saw how the girls in our workshops toil for long hours and little pay. The great shops, whose partners are very rich men, treat them no better than do the poor traders whose living has to be got by scraping it off their wages. Now, I thought that if we were to start a shop in which there was to be no mistress, but to be self-governed, and to share the proceeds among them all in due order and with regard to skill and industry, we might adjust our own hours for the general good. This kind of shop has been tried by men, but I think it has never succeeded, because they wanted the capital to start it with. What could we three girls have done with nothing but our own

hands to help us? So I wrote to a young lady who has much money. Yes, Mr. Goslett, I wrote to that Miss Messenger of whom we have so often talked.'

'Miss Messenger!' Rebekah gasped; 'she who owns the Great Brewery?'

'The same. She has taken up our Cause. It is she who finds the funds to start us, just as well as if we had capital. She gives us the rent for a year, the furniture, the glass house—everything, even this piano. I have a letter from her in my pocket.' She took it out and read it. 'Miss Messenger begs to thank Miss Kennedy for her report of the progress made in her scheme. She quite approves of the engagements made, particularly those of Rebekah Hermitage and Nelly Sorensen. She hopes, before long, to visit the house herself and make their acquaintance. Meanwhile, she will employ the house for all such things as she requires, and begs Miss Kennedy to convey to Miss Hermitage the first order for the workshop.' This gracious letter was accompanied by a long list of things, at sight of which the forewoman's eyes glittered with joy.

'Oh, it is a splendid order!' she said. 'May we tell everybody about this Miss Messenger?'

'I think,' Angela replied, considering carefully, 'that it would be better not. Let people only know that we have started, that we are a body of workwomen governing ourselves and working for ourselves. The rest is for our private information.'

'While you are about it,' said Harry, 'you might persuade Miss Messenger to start the Palace of Delight and the College of Art.'

'Do you think she would?' asked Angela. 'Do you really think it would be any use at all?'

'Did she haggle about your Co-operative Association?'

'No, not at all. She quite agreed with me from the beginning.'

'Then, try her for the Palace. See, Miss Kennedy'—the young man had become quite earnest and eager over the Palace—'it is only a question of money. If Miss Messenger wants to do a thing unparalleled among the deeds of rich men, let her build the Palace of Delight.

If I were she, I should tremble for fear some other person with money got to hear of the idea, and should step in before her. Of course, the grand thing in these cases is to be the first.'

'What is a Palace of Delight?' asked Nelly.

'Truly wonderful it is,' said Harry, 'to think how monotonous are the gifts and bequests of rich men. Schools, churches, almshouses, hospitals—that is all; that is their monotonous round. Now and again, a man like Peabody remembers that men want houses to live in, not hovels! or a good woman remembers that they want sound and wholesome food, and builds a market; but as a rule, schools, churches, almshouses, hospitals. Look at the lack of originality. Miss Kennedy, go and see this rich person; ask her if she wants to do the grandest thing ever done for men; ask her if she will, as a new and startling point of departure, remember that men want joy. If she will ask me, I will deliver a lecture on the necessity of pleasure, the desirableness of pleasure, the beauty of pleasure.'

'A Palace of Delight!' Rebekah shook her

head. 'Do you know that half the people never go to church?'

'When we have got the Palace,' said Harry, 'they will go to church, because religion is a plant that flourishes best where life is happiest. It will spring up among us, then, as luxuriantly as the wild honeysuckle. Who are the most religious people in the world, Miss Hermitage?'

'They are the worshippers in Red Man's Lane, and they are called the Seventh-Day Independents.'

The worst of the Socratic method of argument is that, when the wrong answer is given, the whole thing comes to grief. Now, Harry wanted her to say that the people who go most to church are the wealthy classes. Rebekah did not say so, because she knew nothing of the wealthy classes; and in her own circle of sectarian enthusiasts nobody had any money at all.

CHAPTER X.

THE GREAT DAVENANT CASE.

'Oh! you obstinate old man! Oh! you lazy old man!'

It was the high-pitched voice of her ladyship in reediest tones, and the time was eleven o'clock in the forenoon, when, as a rule, she was engaged in some needlework for herself, or assisting Mrs. Bormalack with the pudding, in a friendly way, while her husband continued the statement of the Case, left alone in the enjoyment of the sitting-room—and his title.

'You lazy old man!'

The words were overheard by Harry Goslett. He had been working at his miraculous Cabinet, and was now, following the example of Miss Kennedy's workgirls, 'knocking off' for half an hour, and thinking of some excuse for passing the rest of the morning with that young lady. He stood in the doorway, looking

across the Green to the sacred windows of the Dressmakers' Association. Behind them at this moment were sitting, he knew, the Queen of the Mystery, with that most beauteous nymph, the matchless Nelly, fair and lovely to look upon; and with her, too, Rebekah the downright, herself a Mystery, and half-a-dozen more, some of them, perhaps, beautiful. Alas! in working hours these doors were closed. Perhaps, he thought, when the Cabinet was finished he might make some play by carrying it backwards and forwards, measuring, fitting, altering.

'You lazy, sinful, sleepy old man!'

A voice was heard feebly remonstrating.

'Oh! oh! oh!' she cried again in accents that rose higher and higher, 'we have come all the way from America to prove our Case. There's four months gone out of six—oh! oh!—and you with your feet upon a chair—oh! oh!—do you think you are back in Canaan City?'

'Clara Martha,' replied his lordship, in clear and distinct tones,—the window was wide open, so that the words floated out upon the summer air, and struck gently upon

Harry's ear,—'Clara Martha, I wish I was—it is now holiday time and the boys are out in the woods. And the schoolroom—' he stopped, sighed deeply, and yawned—'it was very peaceful.'

She groaned in sheer despair.

'He is but a Carpenter,' she said, 'he grovels in the shavings; he wallows in the sawdust. Fie upon him! This man a British Peer? Oh! shame—shame!' Harry pictured the quivering shoulders and the finger of reproach. 'Oh! oh! He is not worthy to wear a coronet. Give him a chunk of wood to whittle, and a knife and a chair in the shade, and somethin' to rest his feet upon. That's all he wants, though Queen Victoria and all the angels was caliin' for him across the ocean to take his seat in the House of Lords. Shame on him! Shame upon him!'

These taunts, apparently, had no effect. His lordship was understood by the listener to say something disrespectful of the Upper House, and to express regret at having exchanged his humble but contented position of school teacher and his breakfasts, where a man could look

around him and see hot rolls and muffins and huckleberry pies, for the splendour of a title, with the meagre fare of London and the hard work of drawing up a Case.

'I *will* rouse him!' she cried, as she executed some movement, the nature of which could only be guessed by the young man outside. The windows, it is true, were open, but one's eyes cannot go outside to look in without the rest of the head and body going too. Whatever it was that she did, his lordship apparently sprang into the air with a loud cry, and, if sound means anything, ran hastily round the table, followed by his illustrious consort.

The listener says and always maintains—'Hairpin.' Those who consider her ladyship incapable of behaviour which might appear undignified reject that interpretation. Moral, not physical, were, according to these thinkers, the means of awakening adopted by Lady Davenant. Even the officers of the Salvation Army, they say, do not use hairpins.

'In the name of common humanity,' said Harry to himself, 'one must interfere.' He knocked at the door, and allowed time for the

restoration of dignity and the smoothing of ruffled plumes.

He found his lordship seated, it is true, but *in the wrong chair*, and his whole frame was trembling with excitement, terror, or some other strong emotion, while the effort he was making to appear calm and composed caused his head to nod and his cheeks to shake. Never was a member of the Upper House placed in a more uncomfortable position. As for her ladyship, she was standing bolt upright at the other side of the room at the window. There was a gleam in her eye and a quivering of her lip which betokened wrath.

'Pardon me, Lady Davenant,' said Harry, smiling sweetly. 'May I interrupt you for a few moments?'

'You may,' replied her husband, speaking for her. 'Go on, Mr. Goslett. Do not hurry yourself, pray. We are glad to see you'—he cleared his throat—'very glad, indeed.'

'I came to say,' he went on, still addressing the lady, 'that I am a comparatively idle man; that is, for the moment I have no work, and am undecided about my movements, and that,

if I can be of any help in the Preparation of the Case, you may command my services. Of course, Lady Davenant, everybody knows the importance of your labours and of his lordship's, and the necessity for a clear Statement of your Case.'

Lady Davenant replied with a cry like a sea-gull. 'Oh! his lordship's labours, indeed! Yes, Mr. Goslett, pretty labours! Day after day goes on—I don't care, Timothy—I don't care who knows it—day after day goes on, and we get no further. Four months and two weeks gone of the time, and the Case not even written out yet.'

'What time?' asked Harry.

'The time that nephew Nathaniel gave us to prove our claim. He found the money for our passage: he promised us six dollars a week for six months. In six months, he said, we should find whether our claim was allowed or not. There it was, and we were welcome for six months. Only six weeks left, and he goes to sleep!'

'But, Lady Davenant—only six weeks! It

is impossible—you cannot send in a claim and get it acknowledged in six weeks. Why, such claims may drag on for years before a Committee of the House of Lords.'

'He wastes all the time: he has got no ambition: he goes to sleep when he ought to be waking. If we have to go home again, with nothing done, it will be because he is so lazy. Shame upon you, obstinate old man! Oh! lazy and sleepy old man!' She shook her finger at him in so terrifying a manner, that he was fain to clutch at the arms of the chair, and his teeth chattered.

'Aurelia Tucker,' her ladyship went on, warming to her work as she thought of her wrongs,—'Aurelia Tucker always said that, Lord or no Lord, my husband was too lazy to stand up for his rights. Everybody in Canaan City knew that he was too lazy. She said that if she was me, and trying to get the family title, she wouldn't go across the water to ask for it, but she would make the American Minister in London tell the British Government that they would just have to grant it, whether they liked it or not, and that a plain American

citizen was to take his place in their House of Lords. Otherwise, she said, let the Minister tell their Mr. Gladstone that Canada would be annexed. That's fine talkin', but as for me I want things done friendly, an' I don't want to see my husband walkin' into his proper place in Westminster with Stars and Stripes flyin' over his head and a Volunteer Fire Brigade Band playin' "Hail! Columbia" before him. No. I said that justice was to be got in the old country, and we only had to cross over and ask for it. Then nephew Nathaniel said that he didn't expect much more justice was to be expected in England than in New Hampshire. And that what you can't always get in a free country isn't always got where there's Lords and Bishops and a Queen. But we might try if we liked for six months. And he would find the dollars for that time. Now there's only six weeks left, and we haven't even begun to ask for that justice.'

'Clara Martha,' said his lordship; 'I've been thinking the matter over, and I've come to the conclusion that Aurelia Tucker is a sensible woman. Let us go home again, and send

the Case to the Minister. Let us frighten them.'

'It does not seem bad advice,' said Harry. 'Hold a meeting in Canaan City, and promise the British Lion that he shall be whipped into a cocked hat unless you get your rights. Make a national thing of it.'

'No!' She stamped her foot, and became really terrible. 'We are here, and we will demand our rights on the spot. If the Minister likes to take up the Case, he may; if not, we will fight our own battles. But oh! Mr. Goslett, it's a dreadful hard thing for a woman and a stranger to do all the fightin' while her husband goes to sleep.'

'Can't you keep awake till you have stated your Case?' asked Harry. 'Come, old boy, you can take it out in slumber afterwards; and if you go on sleeping till the Case is decided, I expect you will have a good long refreshing rest.'

'It was a beautiful morning, Clara Martha,' his lordship explained in apology, 'quite a warm morning. I didn't know people ever had such warm weather in England. And somehow it reminded me of Canaan City



'"*It reminded me of Canaan City in July.*"'

in July. When I think of Canaan, my dear, I always feel sleepy. There was a garden, Mr. Goslett, and trees and flowers, at the back of the school-house. And a bee came in. I didn't know there were bees in England. While I listened to that bee, bummin' around most the same as if he was in a Free Republic, I began to think of home, Clara Martha. That is all.'

'Was it the bee,' she asked with asperity, 'that drew your handkerchief over your head?'

'Clara Martha,' he replied with a little hesitation, 'the bee was a stranger to me. He was not like one of our New Hampshire bees. He had never seen me before. Bees sting strangers.'

Harry interrupted what promised to be the beginning of another lovers' quarrel, to judge by the twitchings of those thin shoulders and the frowning of those bead-like eyes.

'Lady Davenant,' he said, 'let us not waste the time in recrimination; accept my services. Let me help you to draw up the Statement of your Case.'

This was something to the purpose: with a last reproachful glance upon her husband, her

ladyship collected the papers and put them into the hands of her new assistant.

'I'm sure,' she said, 'it's more'n kind of you, Mr. Goslett. Here are all the papers. Mind, there isn't the least doubt about it, not the shadow of a doubt; there never was a claim so strong and clear. Timothy Clitheroe Davenant is as much Lord Davenant by right of lawful descent, as—as—you are your father's son.'

Harry spent the morning with the papers spread before him, arranging the Case. Lord Davenant, now undisturbed, slept quietly in his arm-chair. Her ladyship left them alone.

About half-past twelve the sleeping claimant awoke and rubbed his eyes. 'I have had a most refreshing slumber, Mr. Goslett,' he yawned; 'a man who is married wants it. Sometimes it is what we shall do when we get the title confirmed; sometimes it's why we haven't made out our Case yet; sometimes it's why I don't go and see the Queen myself; sometimes it is how we shall crow over Aurelia Tucker when we are established in our rights but, whatever it is, it is never a quiet

night. I think, Mr. Goslett, that if she'd only hold her tongue and go to sleep, I might make headway with that Case in the morning.'

'It seems straightforward enough,' said Harry. 'I can draw up the thing for you without any trouble. And then you must find out the best way to bring your claim before the House of Lords.'

'Put it into the Post-Office, addressed to the Queen,' suggested the Claimant.

'No—not quite that, I think,' said Harry. 'There's only one weak point in the Case.'

'I knew you'd find out the weak point. She won't allow there's any weak point at all. Says it's clear from beginning to end.'

'So it is, if you make an admission.'

'Well, sir, what is that admission? Let us make it at once, and go on. Nothing can be fairer; we are quite prepared to meet you half-way with that admission.'

His lordship spoke as if conferring an immense advantage upon an imaginary opponent.

'I do not mind,' he said, 'anybody else finding out the weak point, because then I can

tackle him. What vexes me, Mr. Goslett, is to find out that weak point myself. Because then there is nobody to argue it out with, and it is like cold water running down the back, and it keeps a man awake.'

'As for your admission——' said Harry, laughing.

'Well, sir, what is it?'

'Why, of course, you have to admit, unless you can prove it, that this Timothy Clitheroe Davenant, wheelwright, was the Honourable Timothy Clitheroe Davenant, only son of Lord Davenant.'

His lordship was silent for a while.

'Do you think, sir, that the Queen will see this weak point?'

'I am quite sure that her advisers will.'

'And do you think—hush, Mr. Goslett, let us whisper. Do you think that the Queen will refuse to give us the title because of this weak point? Hush! she may be outside.' He meant his wife, not Her Majesty.

'A Committee of the House of Lords most undoubtedly may refuse to consider your claim proved.'

His lordship nodded his head in consideration of this possibility. Then he laughed gently, and rubbed his hands.

'It would be rough at first. That is so, for certain, sure. There would be sleepless nights. And Aurelia Tucker would laugh. Clara Martha would——' he shuddered. 'Wal, if we hev to go home without our title, I should be resigned. When a man is sixty years of age, sir, and, though born to greatness, not brought up accordin' to his birth, he can't always feel like settin' in a row with a crown upon his head; and though I wouldn't own up before Clara Martha, I doubt whether the British Peers would consider my company quite an honour to the Upper House. Though a plain citizen of the United States, sir, is as good as any Lord that lives.'

'Better,' said Harry. 'He is much better.'

'He is, Mr. Goslett, he is. In the land where the Bird of Freedom——'

'Hush, my Lord. You forget that you are a British Peer. No spread-eagle for you.'

Lord Davenant sighed.

'It is difficult,' he said, 'and I suppose

there's no more loyal citizens than us of Canaan City.'

'Well, how are we to connect this Wheelwright Timothy with the Honourable Timothy who was supposed to be drowned?'

'There is his age, and there is his name. You've got those, Mr. Goslett. And then, as we agreed before, we will agree to that little admission.'

'But if everybody does not agree?'

'There is also the fact that we were always supposed to be heirs to something in the old country.'

'I am afraid that is not enough. There is this great difficulty. Why should a young Englishman, the heir to a title and a great property, settle down in America and practise a handicraft?'

'Wal, sir, I can't rightly say. My grandfather carried that secret with him. And if you'll oblige me, sir, you'll tell her ladyship that we are agreed upon that little admission which makes the connection complete. It will be time enough to undeceive her when the trouble begins. As for Aurelia Tucker,

why——' here he smiled sweetly. 'If I know Clara Martha aright, she is quite able to tackle Aurelia by herself.'

This was the way in which the conduct of the Great Davenant Case fell into the hands of a mere working man.

CHAPTER XI.

THE FIRST DAY.

ANGELA'S genteel place of business, destined as it was to greatness, came into the world with little pomp and no pretence. On the day appointed, the work-girls came at nine, and found a brass plate on the door and a wire blind in the windows, bearing the announcement that this was the 'Dressmakers' Association.' This information gave them no curiosity, and produced no excitement in their minds. To them it seemed nothing but another artifice to attract the attention of a public very hard to move. They were quite used to these crafty announcements; they were cynically incredulous of low prices; they knew the real truth as to fabrics of freshness unlasting and stuffs which would never wear out; and as regards forced sales, fabulous prices, and incredible bargains,

they merely lifted the eyelid of the scoffer and went into the work-room. Whatever was written or printed on bills in the window, no difference was ever made to them. Nor did the rise and fall of markets alter their wages one penny. This lack of interest in the success of their work is certainly a drawback to this *métier*, as to many others. Would it not be well if workmen of all kinds were directly interested in the enterprise for which they hire out their labour?

If you have the curiosity to listen to the talk of work-girls in the evenings when they walk home, or as they journey homewards slowly in the crawling omnibus, you will be struck by a very remarkable phenomenon. It is not that they talk without stopping, because that is common to youthful woman in every rank. It is that in the evening they are always exasperated. They snap their lips, they breathe quick, they flash their eyes, they clench their fingers, and their talk is a narrative of indignation full of 'sezee,' 'sezi,' and 'sezshe'—mostly the last, because what 'she' said is generally the cause of all this wrath. A philosopher,

who once investigated the subject, was fortunate enough to discover why work-girls are always angry at eventide. He maintains that it means nothing in the world but Nagging; they all, he says, sit together—forewomen, dressmakers, improvers, and apprentices—in one room. The room, whether large or small, is always close, the hours are long; as they sit at their work, head bent, back bent, feet still, they gradually get the Fidgets. This is a real disease while it lasts. In the workroom it has got to last until the time to knock off. First it seizes the limbs, so that the younger ones want to get up and jump and dance, while the elder ones would like to kick. If not relieved, the patient next gets the Fidgets in her nerves, so that she wriggles in her chair, gets spasmodic twitchings, shakes her head violently, and bites her thread with viciousness. The next step is extreme irritability; this is followed by a disposition on the part of the forewoman to find fault, and by a determination on the part of the work-girls not to be put upon, with an intention of speaking up should the occasion arise. Then comes Nagging, which is, in fact, nothing

but Fidgets translated into English Prose. Some forewomen are excellent translators. And the end is general exasperation, with fines, notices to leave, warnings, cheekiness, retorts, accusations, charges, denials, tears, fault-findings, sneers, angry words, bitter things, personal reflections, innuendoes, disrespect, bullying, and every element of a Row Royal. Consequently, when the girls go home they are exasperated.

We know how Angela proposed to prevent the outbreak of this contagious disorder by ventilation, exercise, and frequent rests.

She took her place among the girls, and worked with them, sitting beside Nelly Sorensen, who was to have charge of the work-room. Rebekah, with Miss Messenger's magnificent Order on her mind, sat in the show-room waiting for visitors. But none came except Mrs. Bormalack, accompanied by her Ladyship, who stepped over to offer their congratulations and best wishes, and to see what Miss Messenger was going to have.

At eleven o'clock, when the first two hours' pull is beginning to be felt by the younger hands, Angela invited everybody to rest for

half an hour. They obeyed with some surprise, and followed her with considerable suspicion, as if some mean advantage was going to be taken of them, some trick 'sprung' upon them.

She took them into a kind of court, which had been the back garden, paved with asphalte and provided with nets, racquets, and all the gear for lawn tennis. She invited them to play for half an hour. It was a fine morning in early September, with a warm sun, a bright sky, and a cool breeze—the very day for lawn tennis. The girls, however, looked at the machinery and then at each other, and showed no inclination for the game. Then Angela led the way into the great glass room, where she pointed out the various bars, ropes, and posts which she had provided for their gymnastic exercises. They looked at each other again, and showed a disposition to giggle.

They were seven girls in all, not counting Rebekah, who remained in the show-room; and Nelly, who was a little older than the rest, stood rather apart. The girls were not unhealthy-looking, being all quite young, and

therefore not as yet ruined as to the complexion by gas and bad air. But they looked dejected, as if their work had no charms for them—indeed, one can hardly imagine that it had—they were only surprised, not elated, at the half-hour's recreation; they expected that it would be deducted from their wages, and were resentful.

Then Angela made them a speech. She said, handling a racquet to give herself confidence, that it was highly necessary to take plenty of exercise in the open air; that she was sure work would be better done and more quickly done if the fingers did not get too tired; therefore, that she had had this tennis-court prepared for them and the gymnasium fitted up, so that they might play in it every day. And then selecting Nelly and two others, who seemed active young creatures, she gave them their first lesson in lawn tennis.

The next day she gave a lesson to another set. In a few days tennis became a passion with the girls. The fashion spread. Lawn tennis is not an expensive game; shortly there will be no bit of square garden or vacant space

in Stepney but will be marked out into its lawn-tennis courts.

The gymnasium took longer to become popular. Girls do not like feats of strength; nor was it until the spell of wet weather last October, when outdoor games became impossible, that the gymnasium began to attract at all. Then a spirit of emulation was set up, and bodily exercises became popular. After becoming quite sure that no deduction was made on account of the resting time, the girls ceased to be suspicious, and accepted the gift with something like enthusiasm. Yet, Miss Kennedy was their employer: therefore, a natural enemy; therefore, gifts from her continued, for some time, to be received with doubt and suspicion. This does not seem, on the whole, a healthy outcome of our social system; yet such an attitude is unfortunately common among work-girls.

At half-past eleven they all resumed work.

At one o'clock another astonishment awaited them.

Miss Kennedy informed them that one of the reforms introduced by her was the provid-

ing of dinner every day, without deducting anything from the wages. Those to whom dinner was, on most days, the mockery of a piece of bread-and-butter, or a bun, or some such figment and pretence of a meal, simply gasped, and the stoutest held her breath for a while, wondering what these things might mean.

Yes, there was dinner laid for them upstairs on a fair white cloth; for every girl a plentiful dish of beef with potatoes and other good things, and a glass of Messenger's Family Ale—that at eight and six the nine-gallon cask;—and bread *à discrétion*. Angela would have added pudding, but was dissuaded by her forewoman, on the ground that not only would pudding swallow up too much of the profits, but that it would demoralise the girls. As it was, one of them, at the mere aspect and first contemplation of the beef, fell a-weeping. She was lame, and she was the most dejected among them all. Why she wept, and how Angela followed her home, and what that home was like, and why she and her mother and her sisters do now continually praise and pray for Angela, belong to another story, concerned

with the wretchedness and misery which are found at Whitechapel and Stepney, as well as in Soho and Marylebone and the back of Regent Street. I shall not write many chapters of that story, for my own part.

Truly a most wonderful workshop. Was ever such an association of dressmakers?

After dinner they frolicked and romped, though as yet in an untaught way, until two, when they began work again.

Miss Kennedy then made them another speech.

She told them that the success of their enterprise depended in great measure upon their own industry, skill and energy; that they were all interested in it, because they were to receive, besides their wages, a share in the profits; this they only partly understood. Nor did they comprehend her scheme much more when she went on to explain that they had the house and all the preliminary furniture found for them, so that there would be nothing, at first, to pay for rent. They had never considered the question of rent, and the thing did not go home to them. But they saw in some

vague way that here was an employer of a kind very much unlike any they had ever before experienced, and they were astonished and excited.

Later on, when they might be getting tired again, they had a visitor. It was no other than Captain Sorensen. He said that by permission of Miss Kennedy he would read to them for an hour, and that, if she permitted and they liked, as he was an old man with nothing to do, he would come and read to them often.

So this astonishing day passed on.

They had tea at five, with another half-hour's rest. As the evening was so fine, it was served in the garden.

At seven they found that it was time to strike work—an hour at least earlier than at any other house. What *could* these things mean?

And then fresh marvels. For when the work was put away, Miss Kennedy invited them all to follow her upstairs. There she formally presented them with a room for their own use in the evening if they pleased. There was a piano in it; but, unfortunately, nobody

could play. The floor was polished for dancing, but then no one could dance; and there was a table with games upon it, and magazines and illustrated papers. In this room, Miss Kennedy told them, they could sing, dance, play, read, talk, sit, or do anything else in reason, and within the limits of modest recreation. They might also, on Saturday evenings, bring their friends, brothers, and so forth, who would also be expected to behave within the limits of modesty and good breeding. In short, the place was to be a drawing-room, and Angela proposed to train the girls by example and precept into a proper feeling as regards the use of a drawing-room. There was to be no giggling, no whispering in corners, nor was there to be any horseplay. Good manners lie between horseplay on the one hand and giggling on the other.

The kind of evening proposed by their wonderful mistress struck the girls at first with a kind of stupefaction. Outside, the windows being open, they could hear the steps of those who walked, talked, and laughed on Stepney Green. They would have preferred to be

among that throng of idle promenaders; it seemed to them a more beautiful thing to walk up and down the paths than to sit about in a room and be told to play. There were no young men. There was the continual presence of their employer. They were afraid of her; there was also Miss Hermitage, of whom also they were afraid; there was, in addition, Nelly Sorensen, of whom they might learn to be afraid. As for Miss Kennedy, they were the more afraid of her because, not only did she walk, talk, and look like a person out of another world, but, oh! wonderful! she knew nothing—evidently nothing—of their little tricks. Naturally one is afraid of a person who knows nothing of one's wicked ways. This is the awkwardness in entertaining angels. They naturally assume that their entertainers stand on the same elevated level as themselves; this causes embarrassment. Most of us, like Angela's shop-girls, would, under the circumstances, betray a tendency to giggle.

Then she tried to relieve them from their awkwardness by sitting down to the piano and playing a lively gallop.

'Dance, girls!' she cried.

In their early childhood, before they went to school or work-shop, the girls had been accustomed to a good deal of dancing. Their ball-room was the street; their floor was the kerbstone; their partners had been other little girls; their music the organ-grinder's. They danced with no steps, save such as came by nature; but their little feet struck true and kept good time. Now they were out of practice; they were grown big, too; they could no longer seize each other by the waist and caper round and round. Yet the music was inspiriting; eyes brightened, their heels became as light as air. Yet, alas! they did not know the steps.

Angela stopped playing and looked round her. The girls were crowded together.

Rebekah Hermitage sat apart at the table. There was that in her face which betokened disapproval, mingled with curiosity, for she had never seen a dance, and never, except on a barrel-organ, heard dance music. Nelly Sorensen stood beside the piano watching the player with the devotion which belongs to the disciple

who loves the most. Whatever Miss Kennedy did was right and sweet and beautiful. Also, whatever she did filled poor Nelly with a sense of humiliation, because she herself felt so ignorant.

'Rebekah! Nelly!' cried Angela. 'Can you not help me?'

Both shook their heads.

'I cannot dance,' said Rebekah, trying to show a little scorn or, at least, some disapprobation. 'In our Connection we never dance.'

'You never dance?' Angela forgot for the moment that she was in Stepney, and among a class of girls who do not dance. 'Do you sing?'

'If any is merry,' replied Rebekah, 'let him sing hymns.'

'Nelly, can you help me?'

She, too, shook her head. But, she said, 'her father could play the fiddle. Might he come?'

Angela begged her to invite him immediately, and on her way to ask Mr. Goslett, at Mrs. Bormalack's, to bring his fiddle too. Between them they would teach the girls to dance.

Then she sat down and began to sing. First she sang, 'By the Banks of Allan Water,' and then 'The Bailiff's Daughter of Islington,' and next, 'Drink to me only with thine eyes'—sweet and simple ditties all. Then came Captain Sorensen, bearing his fiddle, and happy to help; and while he played, Angela stood all the girls in a row before her, headed by Nelly, and gave them their first lesson in the giddy dance.

Then came Harry Goslett; and at sight of his cheerful countenance and at the mere beholding how he bowed to Miss Kennedy, and asked to be allowed, and put his arm round her waist and whirled her round in a gallop, their hearts were lifted up, and they longed no more for Stepney Green. Then he changed Miss Kennedy for Nelly; and though she was awkward at first, she soon fell into the step, while Miss Kennedy danced with another; and then Mr. Goslett with another, and so on till all had had a practical lesson. Then they ceased altogether to long for the jest of the gallant 'prentice; for what were jests to this manly, masterful seizure by the waist, this lifting almost

off the feet, this whirl round and round to the music of the fiddle which the brave old Captain played as merrily as any bo'sn's mate or quartermaster on an East Indiaman? In half an hour the feet of all but one—the one who, poor girl, was lame—felt that noble sympathy with the music so readily caught by those intelligent organs, and—*they could dance.* Perhaps for the first time in the annals of Stepney, her daughters had learned to dance.

The rest would be easy. They tried a quadrille, then another gallop. Harry endeavoured to do his duty, but there were some who remarked that he danced twice, that second gallop, with Nelly Sorensen, and they were jealous. Yet it was only an unconscious tribute paid to beauty. The young fellow was among a bevy of dressmakers; an uncommon position for a man of his bringing-up. One of them, somehow, was, to all appearance, and to any but perhaps the most practised eye, a real genuine lady—not a copy at all; the other was so graceful and sweet that she seemed to want but a touch to effect the transformation. As for the other girls, they were simple young

persons of the work-room and counter—a common type. So common, alas! that we are apt to forget the individuality of each, her personal hopes, and her infinite possibilities. Yet, however insignificant is the crowd, the individual is so important.

Then he was interested in the dark-eyed girl who sat by herself at the table, looking on anxiously, at an amusement she had always heard of as 'soul-destroying.' She was wondering why her ears were pleased with the playing, and why her brain was filled with strange images, and why it was so pleasant to watch the girls dancing, their eyes aglow and their cheeks flushed.

'Do not tempt me,' she said, when Harry ventured to invite her, too, to join the giddy throng. 'Do not tempt me—no—go away!'

Her very brusqueness showed how strong was the temptation. Was she, already, giving way at the first temptation?

Presently, the evening was over, the girls had all trooped noisily out of the house, and Angela, Captain Sorensen, Nelly, and the young workman, were walking across the Green in the direction of the Almshouse.

When Angela got home to the Boarding House the dreariness of the evening was in full blast. The boarders were sitting in silence, each wrapt in his own thoughts. The Professor lifted his head as she entered the room, and regarded her with thoughtful eyes, as if appraising her worth as a *clairvoyante*. David Fagg scowled horribly. His lordship opened his mouth as if to speak, but said nothing. Mr. Maliphant took his pipe out of his mouth, and began a story. 'I remember,' he said, 'the last time but one that he was ruined'—he did not state the name of the gentleman—'the whole town was on fire, and his house with them. What did he do? Mounted his horse and rode around, and bought up all the timber for twenty miles around. And see what he's worth now!' When he had told his story he relapsed into silence. Angela thought of that casual collection of unsympathetic animals put into a cage and called 'Happy Family.'

CHAPTER XII.

SUNDAY AT THE EAST END.

SUNDAY morning in and about the Whitechapel and Mile End Roads, Angela discovered to be a time of peculiar interest. The closing of the shops adds to the dignity of the broad thoroughfares, because it hides so many disagreeable and even humiliating things. But it by no means puts a stop to traffic, which is conducted with an ostentatious disregard of the Fourth Commandment or Christian custom. At one end, the City end, is Houndsditch, crowded with men who come to buy and sell; and while the bells of St. Botolph call upon the faithful with a clanging and clashing which ring like a cry of despair, the footpath is filled with the busy loungers, who have long since ceased to regard the invitation as having anything at all to do with them.

Strange and wonderful result of the gathering of men in great cities! It is not a French, or an English, or a German, or an American result—it is universal; in every great city of the world, below a certain level, there is no religion—men have grown dead to their higher instincts; they no longer feel the possibilities of humanity; faith brings to them no more the evidence of things unseen. They are crowded together, so that they have ceased to feel their individuality. The crowd is eternal—they are part of that eternity; if one drops out, he is not missed; nobody considers that it will be his own turn some day so to drop out. Life is nothing for ever and ever, but work in the week with as much beer and tobacco as the money will run to, and loafing on Sundays with more beer and tobacco. This, my friends, is a truly astonishing thing, and a thing unknown until this century. Perhaps, however, in ancient Rome, the people had ceased to believe in their Gods; perhaps, in Babylon, the sacred bricks were kicked about by the unthinking mob; perhaps, in every great city, the same loss of individual manhood may be found.

It was on a Sunday morning in August that Angela took a little journey of exploration, accompanied by the young workman who was her companion in these excursions. He led her into Houndsditch and the Minories, where she had the pleasure of inspecting the great Mercantile Interest of old clothes, and of gazing upon such as buy and sell therein. Then she turned her face northwards, and entered upon a journey which twenty years ago would have been full of peril, and is now, to one who loves his fellow man, full of interest.

The great Boulevard of the East was thronged with the class of men who keep the Sabbath in holy laziness with tobacco. Some of them lounge, some talk, some listen, all have pipes in their mouths. Here was a circle gathered round a man who was waving his arms and shouting. He was an Apostle of Temperance; behind him stood a few of his private friends to act as a *claque*. The listeners seemed amused but not convinced. 'They will probably,' said Harry, 'enjoy their dinner beer quite as much as if they had not heard this sermon.' Another circle was gathered round a man in a cart, who

had a flaming red flag to support him. He belonged, the flag told the world, to the Tower Hamlets Magna Charta Association. What he said was listened to with the same languid curiosity and tepid amusement. Angela stopped a moment to hear what he had to say. He was detailing, with immense energy, the particulars of some awful act of injustice committed upon a friend unknown, who got six months. The Law of England is always trampling upon some innocent victim, according to this sympathiser with virtue. The working men have heard it all before, and they continue to smoke their pipes, their blood not quickened by a single beat. The ear of the people is accustomed to vehemence; the case must be put strongly before it will listen at all; and listening, as most bawlers discover, is not conviction.

Next to the Magna Charta brethren a cheap-jack had placed his cart. He drove a roaring trade in two-penn'orths, which, out of compliment to a day which should be devoted to good works, consisted each of a bottle of sarsaparilla, which he called 'sassaple,' and a box of pills. Next to him the costers stood beside their carts

loaded with cheap ices, ginger-beer, and lemonade—to show that there was no deception, a great glass jar stood upon each cart with actual undeniable slices of lemon floating in water and a lump of ice upon the top; there were also piles of plums, plums without end, early August apples, and windfall pears; also sweet things in foot-long lumps sticky and gruesome to look upon; Brazil nuts, always a favourite article of commerce in certain circles, though not often met with at the tables of the luxurious; late oranges, more plums, many more plums, plums in enormous quantities; and periwinkles, which last all the year round, with whelks and vinegar, and the toothsome shrimp. Then there came another circle, and in the midst stood a young man, with long fair hair and large blue eyes. He was preaching the Gospel, as he understood it; his face was the face of an enthusiast; a little solitude, a little meditation among the mountains, would have made this man a seer of visions and a dreamer of dreams. He was not ridiculous, though his grammar was defective and his pronunciation had the cockney twang, and his aspirates were wanting; nothing is

ridiculous that is in earnest. On the right of the street they passed the head-quarters of the Salvation Army; the brave warriors were now in full blast, and the fighting, 'knee-drill,' singing, and storming of the enemy's fort were at their highest and most enjoyable point; Angela looked in and found an immense hall crammed with people who came to fight, or to look on, to scoff, or gaze. Higher up, on the left, stands a rival in red-hot religion, the Hall of the Jubilee Singers, where another vast crowd was worshipping, exhorting, and singing.

'There seems,' said Angela, 'to be too much exhorting; can they not sit down somewhere in quiet for praise and prayer?'

'We working people,' replied her companion, 'like everything loud and strong. If we are persuaded to take a side, we want to be always fighting on that side.'

Streams of people passed them, lounging or walking with a steady purpose. The former were the indifferent and the callous, the hardened and the stupid, men to whom preachers and orators appealed in vain; to whom Peter the Hermit might have bawled himself hoarse,

and Bernard would have thrown all his eloquence away; they smoked short pipes, with their hands in their pockets, and looked good-tempered; with them were boys, also smoking short pipes, with their hands in their pockets. Those who walked were young men dressed in long frock-coats of a shiny and lustrous black, who carried Bibles and Prayer Books with some ostentation. They were on their way to church; with them were their sisters, for the most part well-dressed, quiet girls, to whom the noise and the crowds were a part of life, a thing not to be avoided, hardly felt as a trouble.

'I am always getting a new sensation,' said Angela.

'What is the last?'

'I have just realised that there are thousands and thousands of people who never, all their lives, get to a place where they can be quiet. Always noise, always crowds, always buying and selling.'

'Here, at least,' said Harry, 'there is no noise.'

They were at the wicket gate of the Trinity Almshouse.

'What do you think, Miss Kennedy?'

'It is a haven of rest,' she replied, thinking of a certain picture. 'Let us, too, seek peace awhile.'

It was just eleven o'clock, and the beadsmen were going to their chapel. They entered the square, and joined the old men in their weekly service. Angela discovered to her disappointment, that the splendid flight of steps leading to the magnificent portal was a dummy, because the real entrance to the chapel was a lowly door beneath the stone steps, suited, Mr. Bunker would have said, to the humble condition of the moneyless.

It is a plain chapel, with a small organ in the corner, a tiny altar, and over the altar the ten commandments in a black wood frame—rules of life for those whose life is well-nigh done—and a pulpit, which serves for reading the service as well as delivering the sermon. The congregation consisted of about thirty of the almsmen, with about half as many old ladies; and Angela wondered why these old ladies were all dressed in black, and all wore crape. Perhaps they desired by the use of this

material to symbolise mourning for the loss of opportunities for making money; or for the days of beauty and courtship, or for children dead and gone, or to mark the humility which becomes an Inmate, or to do honour to the day which is still revered by many Englishwomen as a day of humiliation and rebuke, or in the belief that crape confers dignity. We know not, we know nothing; the love which women bear for crape is a mystery; man can but speculate idly on their ways. We are like the philosopher picking up pebbles by the seaside. Among the old people sat Nelly Sorensen, a flower of youth and loveliness, in her simple black dress, and her light hair breaking out beneath her bonnet. The Catholics believe that no church is complete without a bone of some dead saint or beatified person. Angela made up her mind, on the spot, that no act of public worship is complete without the assistance of youth as well as of age.

The men were all dressed alike in blue coats and brass buttons, the uniform of the place; they seemed all, with the exception of one who was battered by time, and was fain to

sit while the rest stood, to be of the same age, and that might be anything between a hearty sixty-five and a vigorous eighty. After the manner of sailors, they were all exact in the performance of their share in public worship, following the prayers in the book and the lessons in the Bible. When the time came for listening they straightened themselves out, in an attitude comfortable for listening. The Scotch elder assumes, during the sermon, the air of a hostile critic; the face of the British rustic becomes vacant; the eyes of the ordinary listener in church show that his thoughts are far away; but the expression of a sailor's face, while he is performing the duty—part of the day's duty—of listening to the sermon, shows respectful attention, although he may have heard it all before.

Angela did not listen much to the sermon: she was thinking of the old men for whom that sermon was prepared. There was a fresh colour upon their faces, as if it was not so very long since their cheeks had been fanned by the strong sea breeze; their eyes were clear, they possessed the bearing which comes of the habit

of command, and they carried themselves as if they were not ashamed of their poverty. Now Bunker, Angela reflected, would have been very much ashamed, and would have hung his head in shame. But then Bunker was one of the nimble-footed hunters after money, while these ignoble persons had contented themselves with the simple and slavish record of duty done.

The service over, they were joined by Captain Sorensen and his daughter, and for half an hour walked in the quiet court behind the church, in peaceful converse. Angela walked with the old man, and Nelly with the young man. It matters little what they talked about, but it was something good, because when the Captain went home to his dinner, he kissed his daughter, and said that it seemed to him that it was the best day's work he ever did when he let her go to Miss Kennedy.

In the evening, Angela made another journey of exploration with the same escort. They passed down Stepney Green, and plunged among the labyrinth of streets lying between the Mile End Road and the Thames. It is as unlovely a collection of houses as may be found

anywhere, always excepting Hoxton, which may fairly be considered the Queen of Unloveliness. The houses in this part are small, and they are almost all of one pattern. There is no green thing to be seen; no one plants trees, there seem to be no gardens; no flowers are in the windows; there is no brightness of paint or of clean windows; there is nothing of joy, nothing to gladden the eye.

'Think,' said Harry, almost in a whisper, as if in homage to the Powers of Dirt and Dreariness, 'think what this people could be made if we could only carry out your scheme of the Palace of Delight.'

'We could make them discontented, at least,' said Angela. 'Discontent must come before reform.'

'We should leave them to reform themselves,' said Harry. 'The mistake of philanthropists is to think that they can do for people what can only be done by the people. As you said this morning, there is too much exhorting.'

Presently they struck out of a street rather more dreary than its neighbours, and found

themselves in a broad road with a great church.

'This is Limehouse Church,' said Harry. 'All round you are sailors. There is East India Dock Road. Here is West India Dock Road. There is the Foreign Sailors' Home: and we will go no further, if you please, because the streets are all full, you perceive, of the foreign sailors and the English sailors and the sailors' friends.'

Angela had seen enough of the sailors. They turned back. Harry led her through another labyrinth into another broad street, also crowded with sailors.

'This is Shadwell,' said her guide; 'and if there is anything in Shadwell to interest you, I do not know what it is. Survey Shadwell!'

Angela looked up the street and down the street; there was nothing for the eye in search of the beautiful or the picturesque to rest upon. But a great bawling of rough voices came from a large tent stuck up, oddly, beside the road. A white canvas sheet with black letters proclaimed this as the place of worship of the

'Happy Gypsies.' They were holding their Sunday Function.

'More exhorting!' said Angela.

'Now, this,' he said, as they walked along, 'is a more interesting place. It used to be called Ratcliffe Highway, and had the reputation of being the wickedest place in London. I dare say it was all brag, and that really it was not much worse than its neighbours.'

It is a distinctly squalid street, that now called St. George's-in-the-East. But it has its points; it is picturesque, like a good many dirty places; the people are good-tempered, though they do not wash their faces even on Sundays. They have quite left off knocking down, picking pockets, kicking, and robbing the harmless stranger; they are advancing slowly towards civilisation.

'Come this way,' said Harry.

He passed through a narrow passage, and led the way into a place at the sight of which Angela was fain to cry out in surprise.

In it was nothing less than a fair and gracious garden planted with flowers, and these in the soft August sunshine showed sweet and

lovely. The beds were well kept; the walks were of asphalte; there were seats set about, and on them old women and old men sat basking in the evening sun. The young men and maidens walked along the paths—an Arcadian scene.

'This little strip of Eden,' said Harry, 'was cut out of the old churchyard.'

The rest of the churchyard was divided from the garden by a railing, and round the wall were the tombstones of the departed obscure. From the church itself was heard the rolling of the organ and the soft singing of a hymn.

'This,' said Angela, 'is better than exhortation. A garden for meditation and the church for prayer. I like this place better than the Whitechapel Road.'

'I will show you a more quiet place still,' said her guide. They walked a little way farther down the main street, then he turned into a narrow street on the north, and Angela found herself in a square of clean houses round an enclosure of grass. Within the enclosure was a chapel, and tombs were dotted on the grass.

They went into the chapel, a plain edifice of the Georgian kind with round windows, and the evening sun shone through the window in the west. The high pews were occupied by a congregation of forty or fifty, all men. They all had light brown hair, and as they turned round to look at the new-comers, Angela saw that they all had blue eyes. The preacher, who wore a black gown and bands, was similarly provided as to hair and eyes. He preached in a foreign tongue, and as it is difficult to be edified by a sermon not in one's native speech, they shortly went out again. They were followed by the verger, who seemed not indisposed to break the monotony of the service by a few minutes' walk.

He talked English imperfectly, but he told them that it was the Church of the Swedes. Angela asked if they were all sailors. He said, with some seeming contempt for sailors, that only a few of them were sailors. She then said that she supposed that they were people engaged in trade. He shook his head again, and informed her with a mysterious air that many of the Swedish nobility lived in that neighbourhood.

After this they came away, for fear of greater surprises.

They followed St. George's-in-the-East to the end of the street. Then they turned to the right, and passed through a straight and quite ignoble road leading north. It is a street greatly affected by Germans. German names are over every shop and on every brass plate. They come hither, these honest Germans, because to get good work in London is better than going after it to New York or Philadelphia, and nearer home. In the second generation their names will be Anglicised, and their children will have become rich London merchants, and very likely Cabinet ministers. They have their churches, too, the Reformed and the Lutheran, with nothing to choose between them on the score of ugliness.

'Let us get home,' said Angela; 'I have seen enough.'

'It is the joylessness of the life,' she explained, 'the ignorant, contented joylessness, which weighs upon one. And there is so much of it. Surely there is no other city in the

world which is so utterly without joy as this East London.'

'No,' said Harry, 'there is not in the whole world a city so devoid of pleasant things. They do not know how to be happy. They are like your work-girls when you told them to dance.'

'Look!' she cried, 'what is that?'

There was a hoarse roar of many voices from a court leading out of the main road; the roar became louder; Harry drew the girl aside as a mob of men and boys and women rushed headlong out of the place. It was not a fight apparently, yet there was beating with sticks and kicking. For those who were beaten did not strike back in return. After a little, the beaters and kickers desisted, and returned to their court as to a stronghold whose rights they had vindicated.

Those who had been beaten were a band of about a dozen men and women. The women's shawls were hanging in tatters, and they had lost their bonnets. The men were without hats, and their coats were grievously torn. There was a thing among them which had

been a banner, but the pole was broken, and the flag was dragged in the dirt and smirched.

One of them who seemed to be the leader —he wore a uniform coat something like a volunteer's coat — stepped to the front and called upon them all to form. Then with a loud voice he led off a hymn, in which all joined as they marched down the street.

He was hatless, and his cheek was bleeding from an open wound. Yet he looked undaunted, and his hymn was a song of triumph. A well-set-up young fellow, with thick black hair and a black beard, but pale cheeks. His forehead was square and firm; his eyes were black and fierce.

'Good heavens!' cried Harry. 'It is my cousin Tom, Captain in the Salvation Army. And that, I suppose, is a regiment. Well, if standing still to be kicked means a victory, they have scored one to-night.'

The pavement was even more crowded than in the morning. The political agitators bawled more fiercely than in the forenoon to their circle of apathetic listeners; the preachers exhorted the unwilling more fervently to embrace

the Faith. Cheap-jack was dispensing more volubly his two penn'orths of 'sassaple.' The workmen lounged along, with their pipes in their mouths, more lazily than in the morning. The only difference was that the shop-boys were now added to the crowd, every lad with a 'twopenny smoke' between his lips; and that the throng was increased by those who were going home from church.

'Let us, too, go home,' said Angela; 'there is too much humanity here: we shall lose ourselves among the crowd.'

CHAPTER XIII.

ANGELA'S EXPERIMENT.

'No, Constance,' Angela wrote, 'I cannot believe that your lectures will be a failure, or that your life's work is destined to be anything short of a brilliant success—an "epoch-making" episode in the history of Woman's Rise.' If your lectures have not yet attracted reading men, it must be because they are not yet known. It is unworthy of faith in your own high mission to suppose that personal appearance or beauty has anything to do with popularity in matters of mind. Who asks — who can ask?—whether a woman of genius is lovely or not? And to take lower ground: every woman owns the singular attractiveness of your own face, which has always seemed to me, apart from personal friendship, the face of pure intellect. I do not give up my belief that the

men will soon begin to run after your lectures as they did after those of Hypatia, and that you will become in the University as great a teacher of Mathematics as Sir Isaac Newton himself. Meantime, it must be, I own, irksome to lecture on Vulgar Fractions, and the First Book of Euclid, and unsatisfactory to find, after you have made a Research and arrived at what seemed a splendid result, that some man has been before you. Patience, Constance!'

At this point the reader, who was of course Constance Woodcote, paused and smiled bitterly. She was angry because she had advertised a course of lectures on some desperately high mathematical subject and no one came to hear them. Had she been, she reflected, a pink and white girl with no forehead and soft eyes, everybody would have rushed to hear her. As it was, Angela, no doubt, meant well, but she was always disposed to give men credit for qualities which they did not possess. As if you could ever persuade a man to regard a woman from a purely intellectual point of view! After all, she thought, civilisation was

only just begun: we live in a world of darkness: the reign of woman is as yet afar off. She continued her reading with impatience. Somehow her friend seemed to have drifted away: their lines were diverging: already the old enthusiasms had given place to the new, and Angela thought less of the great cause which she had once promised to further with her mighty resources.

'As regards the Scholarship which I promised you, I must ask you to wait a little, because my hands are full—so full of important things that even a new scholarship at Newnham seems a small thing. I cannot tell you in a letter what my projects are, and how I am trying to do something new with my great wealth. This, at least, I may tell you, partly because I am intoxicated with my own schemes, and therefore, I must tell everybody I speak to; and partly because you are perfectly certain not to sympathise with me, and therefore you will not trouble to argue the point with me. I have found out, to begin with, a great truth. It is that would-be philanthropists and benefactors and improvers of things have all along

been working on a false assumption. They have taught and believed that the people look up to the "better class"—a phrase invented by the well-to-do in order to show how riches and virtue go together—for guidance and advice. My dear, it is the greatest mistake; they do not look up to us at all; they do not want to copy our ways; they are perfectly satisfied with their own ways; they will naturally take as much money as we choose to give them, and as many presents; and they consider the exhortations, teachings, preachings, admonitions, words of guidance, and advice as uncomfortable but unavoidable accompaniments of this gift. But we ourselves are neither respected nor copied. Nor do they want our culture.'

'Angela,' said the mathematician, 'is really very prolix.'

'This being so, I am endeavouring to make such people as I can get at discontented as a first step. Without discontent, nothing can be done. I work upon them by showing, practically, and by way of example, better things. This I can do because I am here as simply one of themselves—a workwoman among other

workwomen. I do not work so much as the others in our newly-formed Association because I am supposed to run the machine, and to go to the West End for work. Miss Messenger is one of our customers. So much am I one of them, that I take my wages on Saturday, and am to have the same share, and no more, in the business as my dressmakers. I confess to you that in the foundation of my Dressmakers' Association I have violated most distinctly every precept of political and social economy. I have given them a house rent-free for a year; I have fitted it up with all that they want; I have started them with orders from myself; I have resolved to keep them going until they are able to run alone; I give wages, in money and in food, higher than the market value. I know what you will say. It is all quite true, scientifically. But outside the range of science there is humanity. And only think what a great field my method opens for the employment of the unfortunate rich—the unhappy, useless, heavily-burdened rich. They will all follow my example, and help the people to help themselves.

'My girls were at first and for the most part uninteresting, until I came to know them individually: everyone, when you know her, and can sympathise with her becomes interesting. Some are, however, more interesting than others; there are two or three, for instance, in whom I feel a special interest. One of them, whom I love for her gentleness and for her loyalty to me, is the daughter of an old ship captain now in an almshouse. She is singularly beautiful, with an air of fragility which one hopes is not real; she is endowed by nature with a keenly sensitive disposition, and has had the advantage, rare in these parts, of a father who learned to be a gentleman before he came to the almshouse. The other is a religious fanatic, a sectarian of the most positive kind. She knows what is truth more certainly than any Professor of Truth we ever encountered; she is my manager and is good at business. I think she has come to regard me with less contempt, from a business point of view, than she did at first, because in the conduct of the showroom and the trying-on room she has all her own way.

'My evenings are mostly spent with the girls in the garden and "drawing-room." Yes, we have a drawing-room over the work-room. At first we had tea at five and struck work at seven; now we strike at half-past six and take tea with lawn-tennis. I assure you my dress-makers are as fond of lawn-tennis as the students of Newnham. When it is too dark to play, we go upstairs and have music and dancing.' Here followed a word which had been erased. The mathematical lecturer held the letter to the light and fancied the word was 'Harry.' This could hardly be; it must be Hetty, or Kitty, or Lotty, or some such feminine abbreviation. There could be no Harry. She looked again. Strange! It certainly *was* Harry. She shook her head suspiciously, and went on with the letter.

'The girls' friends and sisters have begun to come, and we are learning all kinds of dances. Fortunately my dear old captain from the almshouse can play the fiddle, and likes nothing better than to play for us. We place him in the corner beside the piano, and he plays as long as we please, being the best of all old

captains. We are not well off for men, having at present to rely principally on a superior young cabinet-maker, who can also play the fiddle on occasions. He dances very well, and perhaps he will fall in love with the captain's daughter.

'What I have attempted is, in short, nothing less than the introduction of a love of what we call culture. Other things will follow, but at present I am contented with an experiment on a very humble scale. If I were to go among the people in my name, most of them would try to borrow or steal from me; as I am only a poor dressmaker, only those who have business with me try to take me in. I do not go on a platform and lecture the people: nor do I open a school to teach them; nor do I print and circulate tracts. I simply say, "My dears, I am going to dance and sing, and have a little music, and play lawn-tennis; come with me and we will dance together." And they come. And they behave well. I think it is a strange thing that young women of the lower class always prefer to behave well *when they can*, while young men of their own station take so

much pleasure in noise and riot. We have no difficulty in our drawing-room, where the girls behave perfectly and enjoy themselves in a surprising manner. I find, already, a great improvement in the girls. They have acquired new interests in life: they are happier: consequently, they chatter like birds in spring and sunshine; and whereas, since I came into these regions, it has been a constant pain to listen to the querulous and angry talk of work-girls in omnibuses and in streets, I rejoice that we have changed all this, and while they are with me my girls can talk without angry snapping of the lips, and without the "sezi" and "sezee" and "seshee" of the omnibus. This is surely a great gain for them.

'Next, I observe that they are developing a certain amount of pride in their own superiority: they are lifted above their neighbours, if only by the nightly drawing-room. I fear they will become unpopular from hauteur: but there is no gain without some loss. If only one felt justified in doubling the number of the girls! But the Stepney ladies have hitherto shown no enthusiasm in the cause of the Asso-



ciation. The feeling in these parts is, you see, commercial rather than co-operative.

'The dinner is to me the most satisfactory as well as the most unscientific part of the business. I believe I have no right to give them a dinner at all: it is against the custom in dressmakers' shops, where girls bring their own dinners, poor things: it costs quite a shilling a head every day to find the dinner, and Rebekah, my forewoman, tells me that no profits can stand against such a drain: but I must go on with the dinner even if it swallows up all the profits.

'On Sundays the drawing-room is kept open all day long for those who like to come. Some do, because it is quiet. In the evening we have sacred music. One of the young men plays the violin'—the reader turned back and referred to a previous passage—yes; she had already mentioned a cabinet-maker in connection with a fiddle—no doubt it must be the same—'and we have duets, but I fear the girls do not care much, yet, for classical music——'

Here the reader crumpled up the letter in impatience.

'And this,' she groaned, 'is the result of two years at Newnham! After her course of political economy, after all those lectures, after actually distinguishing herself and taking a place, this is the end! To play the piano for a lot of work-girls: with a cabinet-maker: and an old sailor: and to be a dressmaker! She actually enjoys being a dressmaker! That is, alas! the very worst feature in the case: she evidently likes it: she has no wish to return to civilisation: she has forgotten her science: she is setting a most mischievous example: and she has forgotten her distinct promise to give us a mathematical scholarship.

'Oh! Angela!'

She had imagined that the heiress would endow Newnham with great gifts, and she was disappointed. She had imagined this so very strongly that she felt personally aggrieved and injured: what did she care about Stepney work-girls? What have mathematics to do with poor people in an ugly and poor part of town?

Angela's letter did not convey the whole truth, because she herself was ignorant of the dis-

cussions, gossip, rumours, and reports which were flying about in the neighbourhood of Stepney Green concerning her venture. There were some, for instance, who demonstrated that such an institution must fail for reasons which they learnedly expounded: among these was Mr. Bunker. There were some who were ready to prove, from the highest authorities, the wickedness of trying to do without a proprietor, master, or boss; there were some who saw in this revolutionary movement the beginning of those troubles which will afflict mankind towards the coming of the end; there were others, among whom was also Mr. Bunker, who asked by what right this young woman had come among them to interfere, where she had got her money, and what where her antecedents? To Bunker's certain knowledge, and no one had better sources of information, hundreds had been spent by Miss Kennedy in starting the Association; while, whether it was true that Miss Messenger supported the place or not, there could never be enough work to get back all that money, pay all the wages, and the rent, and the dinners: and hot dinners every

day! There was even talk of getting up a memorial praying Miss Messenger not to interfere with the trade of the place, and pointing out that there were many most respectable dressmakers' shops where the work could be quite as well done as by Miss Kennedy's girls, no doubt cheaper, and the profit would go to the rightful claimant of it, not to be divided among the workwomen.

As for the privileges bestowed upon the girls, there was in certain circles but one opinion—they were ridiculous. Recreation time, free dinner of meat and vegetables, short hours, reading aloud, and a club-room or drawing-room for the evening: what more could their betters have? For it is a fixed article of belief, one of the Twenty-Nine Articles in certain strata of society, that people 'below them' have no right to the enjoyment of anything. They do not mean to be cruel, but they have always associated poverty with dirt, discomfort, disagreeable companions, and the absence of pleasantness; for a poor person to be happy is either to them an impossibility, or it is a flying in the face of Providence. But then, these

people know nothing of the joys which can be had without money. Now, when the world discovers and realises how many these are and how great they are, the reign of the almighty dollar is at an end. Whatever the Stepney folk thought, and however diverse their judgment, they were all extremely curious: and after the place had been open for a few weeks and began to get known, all the ladies from Whitechapel Church to Bow Church began with one consent to call. They were received by a young person of grave face and grave manner, who showed them all they wanted to see, answered all their questions, and allowed them to visit the work-rooms and the show-rooms, the dining-room and the drawing-room; they also saw most beautiful dresses which were being made for Miss Messenger; those who went there in the morning might see with their own eyes dressmaker girls actually playing lawn-tennis, if in the afternoon they might see an old gentleman reading aloud while the girls worked; they might also observe that there were flowers in the rooms; it was perfectly certain that there was a piano upstairs,

because it had been seen by many, and the person in the show-room made no secret at all that there was dancing in the evening, with songs, and reading of books, and other diversions.

The contemplation of these things mostly sent the visitors away in sorrow. *They* did not dance or sing or play, *they* never wanted to dance or sing, lawn-tennis was not played by *their* daughters, *they* did not have bright-covered books to read; what did it mean, giving these things to dressmaker girls? Some of them not only resolved not to send their custom to the Association, but directed tracts to the house.

They came, however, after a time, and had their dresses made there, for a reason which will appear in the sequel. But at the outset they held aloof.

Far different was the reception given to the institution by the people for whose benefit it was designed. When they had quite got over their natural suspicion of a strange thing, when the girls were found to bring home their pay regularly on a Saturday, when the dinner

proved a real thing and the hours continued to be merciful, when the girls reported continuously kind treatment, when the evenings spent in the drawing-room were found to be delightful, and when other doubts and whisperings about Miss Kennedy's motives, intentions, and secret character gradually died away, the Association became popular, and all the needle-girls of the place would fain have joined Miss Kennedy. The thing which did the most to create the popularity was the permission for the girls to bring some of their friends and people on the Saturday evening. They 'received' on Saturday evening: they were at home: they entertained their guests on that night: and, though the entertainment cost nothing but the lights, it soon became an honour and a pleasure to receive an invitation. Most of those who came at first were other girls; they were shy and stood about all arms: then they learned their steps: then they danced: then the weariness wore out of their eyes and the roses came back to their cheeks: they forgot the naggings of the work-room, and felt for the first time the joy of their youth. Some of them were in-

clined at first to be rough and bold, but the atmosphere calmed them; they either came no more, or if they came they were quiet; some of them affected a superior and contemptuous air, not uncommon with 'young persons' when they are jealous or envious, but this is a mood easily cured; some of them were frivolous, but these were also easily subdued. For always with them was Miss Kennedy herself, a Juno, their queen, whose manner was so kind, whose smile was so sweet, whose voice was so soft, whose greeting was so warm, and yet—yet . . . who could not be resisted, even by the boldest or the most frivolous. The first step was not to be afraid of Miss Kennedy: at no subsequent stage of their acquaintance did any cease to respect her.

As for Rebekah, she would not come on Saturday evening, as it was part of her Sabbath; but Nelly proved of the greatest use in maintaining the decorum and in promoting the spirit of the evenings, which wanted, it is true, a leader.

Sometimes the girls' mothers would come, especially those who had not too many babies;

they sat with folded hands and wondering eyes, while their daughters danced, while Miss Kennedy sang, or Mr. Goslett played his fiddle. Angela went among them, talking in her sympathetic way, and won their confidence, so that they presently responded and told her all their troubles and woe. Or sometimes the fathers would be brought, but very seldom came twice. Now and then a brother would appear, but it was many weeks before the brothers began to come regularly; when they did, it became apparent that there was something in the place more attractive than brotherly duty or the love of dancing. Of course, sweethearts were bound to come whether they liked it or not. There were, at first, many little hitches, disagreeable incidents, rebellious exhibitions of temper, bad behaviour, mistakes, social sins, and other things of which the chronicler must be mute, because the general result is all that we desire to record. And this was satisfactory. For the first time the girls learned that there were joys in life, joys even within their reach, with a little help, poor as they were; joys which cost them nothing. Among them were

girls of the very humblest, who had the greatest difficulty in presenting a decent appearance, who lived in crowded lodgings or in poor houses with their numerous brothers and sisters: pale-faced girls: heavy-hearted girls: joyless maidens, loveless maidens: girls who from long hours of work, and from want of open air and good food, stooped their shoulders and dragged their limbs—when Angela saw them first, she wished that she was a man to use strong language against their employers. How she violated all principles of social economy, giving clothes, secretly lending money, visiting mothers, paying rent, and all without any regard to supply and demand, marketable value, price current, worth of labour, wages rate, averages, percentages, interest, capital, commercial rules, theory of trade, encouragement of over-population, would be too disgraceful to narrate; indeed, she blushed when she thought of the beautiful and heart-warming science in which she had so greatly distinguished herself, and on which she trampled daily. Yet if, on the one side, there stood cold science, and, on the other, a suffer-

ing girl, it is ridiculous to acknowledge that the girl always won the day.

Among the girls was one who interested Angela greatly, not because she was pretty, for she was not pretty at all, but plain to look upon, and lame, but because she bore a very hard lot with patience and courage very beautiful to see. She had a sister who was crippled and had a weak back, so that she could not sit up long, nor earn much. She had a mother who was growing old and weak of sight, so that she could not earn much: she had a young brother who lived like the sparrows, that is to say, he ran wild in the streets and stole his daily bread, and was rapidly rising to the dignity and rank of an habitual criminal. He seldom, however, came home, except to borrow or beg for money. She had a father, whose name was never mentioned, so that he was certainly an undesirable father, a bad bargain of a father, a father impossible, viewed in connection with the Fifth Commandment. This was the girl who burst into tears when she saw the roast beef for the first time. Her tears were caused by a number of reasons: first, because she

was hungry and her condition was low; secondly, because roasted beef to a hungry girl is a thing too beautiful; thirdly, because while she was feasting, her sister and her mother were starving. The crippled sister presently came to the house and remained in it all day. What special arrangements were made with Rebekah, the Spirit of Commerce, as regards her pay I know not: but she came, did a little work, sat or lay down in the drawing-room most of the time; and presently, under Miss Kennedy's instruction, began to practise on the piano. A work-girl, actually a work-girl, if you please, playing scales, with a one, two, three, four, one, two, three, four, just as if she was a lady living in the Mile End Road or the daughter of a clerk in the brewery!

Yes: the girls who had formerly worked in unhealthy rooms till half-past eight now worked in well-ventilated rooms till half-past six: they had time to rest and run about: they had good food: they had cheerful talk: they were encouraged: Captain Sorensen came to read to them; in the evening they had a delightful

room to sit in, where they could read and talk, or dance, or listen. While they read the books which Miss Kennedy laid on the table for them, she would play and sing. First, she chose simple songs and simple pieces; and as their taste for music grew, so her music improved; and every day found the drawing-room more attractive, and the girls more loth to go home. She watched her experiment with the keenest interest; the girls were certainly growing more refined in manner and in thought. Even Rebekah was softening daily; she looked on at the dance without a shudder, even when the handsome young workman clasped Nelly Sorensen by the waist and whirled her round the room; and she owned that there was music in the world, outside her little chapel, far sweeter than anything they had within it. As for Nelly, she simply worshipped. Whatever Miss Kennedy did was right and beautiful and perfect in her eyes; nor, in her ignorance of the world, did she ponder any more over that first difficulty of hers, why a lady, and such a lady, had come to Stepney Green to be a dressmaker.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE TENDER PASSION.

It is always a dangerous thing for two young persons of opposite sexes to live together under the same roof, even when the lady is plain and at first sight unattractive, and when the young man is stupid. For they get to know one another. Now, so great is the beauty of human nature, even in its second-rate or third-rate productions, that love generally follows when one of the two, by confession or unconscious self-betrayal, stands revealed to the other. It is not the actual man or woman, you see, who is loved—it is the ideal, the possible, the model or type from which the specimen is copied, and which it distinctly resembles. But think of the danger when the house in which these young people find themselves is not a large country house, where many are gathered together of like pursuits, but an obscure board-

ing house in a Society-forgotten suburb, where these two had only each other to talk to. Add to this that they are both interested in an experiment of the greatest delicacy, in which the least false step would be fatal. Add, further, the fact that each is astonished at the other: the one to find in a dressmaker the refinement and all the accomplishments of a lady; the other to find in a cabinet-maker the distinguishing marks of a gentleman; the same way of looking at things and talking about them; the same bearing and the same courtesy.

The danger was even made greater by what seemed a preventive, namely, by the way in which at the beginning Angela so very firmly put down her foot on the subject of 'keeping company': there was to be no attempt at love-making; on that understanding the two could, and did, go about together as much as they pleased. What followed naturally was that more and more they began to consider, each the other, as a problem of an interesting character. Angela observed that the young workman, whom she had at first considered of a frivolous disposition, seemed to be growing more serious in his views of things, and even

when he laughed there was method in his folly. No men are so solemn, she reflected, as the dull of comprehension; perhaps the extremely serious character of the place in which they lived was making him dull, too. It is difficult, certainly, for anyone to go on laughing at Stepney; the children, who begin by laughing, like children everywhere, have to give up the practice before they are eight years of age, because the streets are so insufferably dull; the grown-up people never laugh at all; when immigrants arrive from livelier quarters, say Manchester or Sheffield, after a certain time of residence—the period varies with the mercurial temperament of the patient—they laugh no more. 'Surely,' thought Angela, 'he is settling down; he will soon find work; he will become like other men of his class; and then, no doubt, he will fall in love with Nelly. Nothing could be more suitable.'

By saying to herself, over and over again, that this arrangement should take place, she had got to persuade herself that it certainly would. 'Nelly possessed,' she said, 'the refinement of manner and nature, without which

the young man would be wretched; she was affectionate and sensible; it would certainly do very well.' And she was hardly conscious, while she arranged this in her own head, of a certain uneasy feeling in her mind, which in smaller creatures might have been called jealousy.

So far, there had been little to warrant the belief that things were advancing in the direction she desired. He was not much more attentive to Nelly than to any other of her girls: worse still, as she reflected with trepidation, there were many symptoms by which he showed a preference for quite another person.

As for Harry, it was useless for him to conceal from himself any longer the fact that he was by this time head-over-ears in love. The situation offered greater temptations than his strength could withstand. He succumbed —whatever the end might be he was in love.

If one comes to think of it, this was rather a remarkable result of a descent into the Lower Regions. One expects to meet in the Home of Dull Ugliness things repellent, coarse, enjoying the freedom of Nature, unrestrained, un-

conventional. Harry found, on the contrary, the sweetness of Eden, a fair garden of delights, in which sat a peerless lady, the Queen of Beauty, a very Venus. All his life, that is, since he had begun to think about love at all, he had stoutly held and strenuously maintained that it was *lèse-majesté*, high treason to love, for a man to throw away—he used to say 'throw away'—upon a maiden of low degree the passion which should be offered to a lady—a demoiselle. The position was certainly altered, inasmuch as he was no longer of gentle birth Therefore, he argued, he would no longer pretend to the hand of a lady. At first he used to make Resolutions, as bravely as a Board of Directors: he would arise and flee to the desert—any place would be a desert without her: he would get out of temptation: he would go back to Piccadilly, and there forget her. Yet he remained: yet every day he sought her again; every day his condition became more hopeless: every day he continued to walk with her, play duets with her, sing with her, dance with her, argue with her, learn from her, teach her, watch over her, and felt

the sunshine of her presence, and at meeting and parting touched her fingers.

She was so well educated, he said, strengthening his faith: she was so kindly and considerate: her manners were so perfect: she was so beautiful and graceful: she knew so well how to command, that he was constrained to own that no lady of his acquaintance was, or could be, her superior. To call her a dressmaker was to ennoble and sanctify the whole craft. She should be to that art what Cecilia is to music—its patron saint: she should be to himself—yet, what would be the end? He smiled grimly, thinking that there was no need to speculate on the end, when as yet there had been no beginning. He could not make a beginning. If he ventured on some shy and modest tentative in the direction of—call it an understanding—she froze. She was always on the watch: she seemed to say, 'Thus far you may presume, but no farther.' What did it mean? Was she really resolved never to receive his advances? Did she dislike him? That could hardly be. Was she watching him? Was she afraid to trust him? That might be.

Or was she already engaged to some other fellow—some superior fellow—perhaps with a shop—gracious heavens!—of his own? That might be, though it made him cold to think it possible. Or did she have some past history, some unhappy complication of the affections, which made her as cold as Dian? That, too, might be.

The ordinary young man, thrown into the society of half-a-dozen working girls, would have begun to flirt and talk nonsense with all of them together, or with one after the other. Harry was not that kind of young man. There is always, by the blessing of kind heaven, left unto us a remnant of those who hold woman sacred, and continually praise, worship, and reverence the name of love. He was one of those young men. To flirt with a milliner did not seem a delightful thing to him, at any time. And in this case there was another reason why he should not behave in the manner customary to the would-be Don Juan: it was simply *foi de gentilhomme*; he was tolerated among them all on a kind of unspoken, but understood, parole. Miss Kennedy received him in

confidence that he would not abuse her kindness.

One Sunday afternoon when they were walking together—it was in one of the warm days of last September—in Victoria Park, they had a conversation which led to really important things. There are one or two very pretty walks in that garden, and though the season was late, and the leaves mostly yellow, brown, crimson, or golden, there were still flowers, and the ornamental water was bright, and the path crowded with people who looked happy, because the sun was shining; they had all dined plentifully, with copious beer, and the girls had got on their best things, and the swains were gallant with a flower in the button-hole and a cigar between the lips. There, is, indeed, so little difference between the rich and the poor; can even Hyde Park in the season go beyond the flower and the cigar? In certain tropical lands, the first step in civilisation is to buy a mosquito curtain, though your dusky epidermis is as impervious as a crocodile's to the sting of a mosquito. In this realm of England the first step towards gentility is the twopenny smoke,

to which we cling, though it is made of medicated cabbage, though it makes the mouth raw, the tongue sore, the lips cracked, the eyes red, the nerves shaky, and the temper short. Who would not suffer in such a cause?

It began with a remark of Angela's about his continued laziness. He replied, evasively, that he had intended to take a long holiday, in order to look round and consider what was best to be done: that he liked holidays: that he meant to introduce holidays into the next trade dispute: that his holidays enabled him to work a little for Miss Kennedy, without counting his lordship, whose Case he had now drawn up: that he was now ready for work whenever, he added airily, work was ready for him: and that he was not, in fact, quite sure that Stepney and its neighbourhood would prove the best place for him to work out his life.

'I should think,' said Angela, 'that it would be as good a place as any you would find in America.'

'If you tell me to stay, Miss Kennedy,' he replied, with a sudden earnestness, 'I will stay.'

She instantly froze, and chillingly said that

if his interests required him to go, of course he would go.

Therefore, Harry, after a few moments' silence, during which he battled with the temptation to 'have it out' there and then, before all the happy shepherds and shepherdesses of Bethnal Green, returned to his original form, and made as if those words had not been spoken and that effect not been produced. You may notice the same thing with children who have been scolded.

'Did you ever consider, Miss Kennedy, the truly happy condition of the perfect cabinet-maker?'

'No: I never did. Is he happy above his fellows?'

'Your questions betray your ignorance. Till lately—till I returned from America—I never wholly realised what a superior creature he is. Why, in the first place, the cabinet-maker is perhaps the only workman who never scamps his work: he is a responsible man: he takes pride in producing a good and honest thing. We have no tricks in our trade. Then, if you care to hear——'

'Pray go on; let me learn all I can.'

'Then, we were the first to organise ourselves. Our society was founded eighty years ago. We had no foolish strike, but we just met the employers and told them we were going to arrange with them what our share should be; and we made a book about wages—I do not think so good a book has been put together this century. Then, we are a respectable lot: you never hear of a cabinet-maker in trouble at a police-court; very few of us get drunk; most of us read books and papers, and have opinions. My cousin Dick has very strong opinions. We are critical about amusements, and we prefer Henry Irving to a music-hall; we do not allow rough talk in the workshops; we are mostly members of some Church, and we know how to value ourselves.'

'I shall know how to value your craft in future,' said Angela, 'especially when you are working again.'

'Yes. I do not want to work in a shop, you know; but one may get a place, perhaps, in one of the railway carriage dépôts, or a

hotel, or a big factory, where they always keep a cabinet-maker in regular pay. My cousin Dick—Dick the Radical—is cabinet-maker in a mangle factory. I do not know what he makes for his mangles, but that is what he is.'

'I have seen your cousin Tom, when he was rolled in the mud and before he led off the hymn and the procession. You must bring me your cousin Dick.'

'Dick is better fun than Tom. Both are terribly in earnest; but you will find Dick interesting.'

'Does he walk about on Sunday afternoons? Should we be likely to meet him here?'

'Oh, no. Dick is forging his speech for to-night. He addresses the Advanced Club almost every Sunday evening on the House of Lords, or the Church, or the Country Bumpkin's Suffrage, or the Cape question, or Protection, or the Nihilists, or Ireland, or America, or something. The speech must be red-hot, or his reputation would be lost. So he spends the afternoon sticking it into the furnace, so to speak. It doesn't matter what the subject is, always provided that he can lug in the bloated

aristocrat and the hated Tory. I assure you, Dick is a most interesting person.'

'Do you ever speak at the Advanced Club?'

'I go there; I am a member; now and then I say a word. When a member makes a red-hot speech, brimful of insane accusations, and sits down amid a round of applause, it is pleasant to get up and set him right on matters of fact, because all the enthusiasm is killed when you come to facts. Some of them do not love me at the Club.'

'They are real and in earnest, while you—'

'No, Miss Kennedy, they are not real, whatever I may be. They are quite conventional. The people like to be roused by red-hot, scorching speeches; they want burning questions, intolerable grievances; so the speakers find them or invent them. As for the audience, they have had so many sham grievances told in red-hot words that they have become callous, and don't know of any real ones. The indignation of the speakers is a sham; the enthusiasm of the listeners is a sham; they applaud the eloquence, but as for the stuff that

is said, it moves them not. As for his politics, the British workman has got a vague idea that things go better for him under the Liberals. When the Liberals come in, after making promises by the thousand, and when, like their predecessors, they have made the usual mess, confidence is shaken. Then he allows the Conservatives, who do not, at all events, promise oranges and beer all round, back again, and gives them another show. As if it matters which side is in to the British workman!'

'And they are not discontented,' asked Angela, 'with their own lives?'

'Not one bit. They don't want to change their own lives. Why should they?'

'All these people in the park to-day,' she continued, 'are they working men?'

'Yes: some of them: the better sort. Of course——' Harry looked round and surveyed the crowd, 'of course, when you open a garden of this sort for the people, the well-dressed come, and the ragged stay away and hide. There is plenty of ragged stuff round and about us, but it hides. And there is plenty of comfort which walks abroad and shows itself. This

end of London is the home of little industries. Here, for instance, they make the things which belong to other things.'

'That seems a riddle,' said Angela.

'I mean things like card-boxes, pill-boxes, ornamented boxes of all kinds, for confectioners, druggists, and drapers; they make all kinds of such things for wholesale houses. Why, there are hundreds of trades in this great neglected city of East London, of which we know nothing. You see the manufacturers. Here they are with their wives, and their sons, and their daughters: they all lend a hand, and between them the thing is made.'

'And are they discontented?' asked Angela with persistence.

'Not they: they get as much happiness as the money will run to. At the same time, if the Palace of Delight were once built——'

'Ah!' cried Angela, with a sigh. 'The Palace of Delight: the Palace of Delight: we must have it: if it is only to make the people discontented.'

They walked home presently, and in the evening they played together, one or two of

the girls being present, in the 'drawing-room.' The music softens: Angela repented her coldness of the afternoon. When the girls were gone, and they were walking side by side beneath moonlight on the quiet green, she made shyly a little attempt at compensation.

'If,' she said, 'you should find work here in Stepney, you would be willing to stay?'

'I would stay,' he replied, 'if you bid me stay—or go, if you bid me go.'

'I would bid you stay,' she replied, speaking as clearly and as firmly as she could, 'because I like your society and because you have been, and will be, I hope, very helpful to us. But if I bid you stay,' she laid her hand upon his arm, 'it must be on no misunderstanding.'

'I am your servant,' he said, with a little agitation in his voice. 'I understand nothing but what you wish me to understand.'

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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